

*What IS  
The Church Doing?*

*by*

*Henry P. Van Dusen*

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*Other Books by the Same Author*

REALITY AND RELIGION (HAZEN SERIES)

METHODISM'S WORLD MISSION

FOR THE HEALING OF THE NATIONS:

IMPRESSIONS OF CHRISTIANITY AROUND THE WORLD

GOD IN THESE TIMES

THE PLAIN MAN SEEKS FOR GOD

IN QUEST OF LIFE'S MEANING

*Edited by Henry P. Van Dusen*

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*What IS  
the Church Doing?*

“As though in preparation for such a time as this, God has been building up a Christian fellowship which now extends into almost every nation, and binds citizens of them all together in unity and mutual love. . . . It is the great new fact of our time. . . . Here is one great ground of hope for the coming days.”

*Archbishop of Canterbury*

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A



To  
WILLIAM PATON  
*Servant of the  
World Christian Movement*



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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Much of whatever value this little book may embody springs from its dependence upon three main sources of factual information. If it encourages some readers to turn directly to these sources, it will have accomplished part of its purpose. I can hardly imagine an intelligent Christian minister or layman failing to avail himself of week-by-week inspiration from these three news bulletins:

*The International Christian Press and Information Service*, issued weekly, provides the most comprehensive body of information about the World Christian Movement in its entirety. Procurable from the American office of the World Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York, at \$2.50 a year.

*The Spiritual Issues of the War*, published weekly by the Religions Division of the British Ministry of Information, gives the fullest account of developments among the Continental Churches, with additional news from other parts of the world. Sent without charge on application to the British Information Services, Rockefeller Plaza, New York City.

*Orphaned Missions*, bulletins issued occasionally by the International Missionary Council, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, and available on request.

The indebtedness of the chapter on "WORLD CHRISTIANITY YESTERDAY AND TOMORROW" to Professor K. S. Latourette's *A History of the Expansion of Christianity* is obvious.

A number of friends have graciously criticized parts or all of the manuscript: Dr. L. S. Albright, Rev. Kenneth J. Beaton, Dr. Bjarne Braatoy, Dr. William Adams Brown, Dr. F. D. Cogswell, Dr. H. Paul Douglass, Dr. Charles W. Iglehart, Dr. K. S. Latourette, Dr. Henry Smith Leiper, Dr. N. A. C. Slotemaker de Bruine, and Dr. A. L. Warnshuis.

This book is, in part, a sequel to *For the Healing of the Nations: Impressions of Christianity Around the World*, and the material and conclusions of that earlier work are presupposed here.

The author's royalties, aside from an allowance for expenses in preparation of the manuscript, have been applied to make the book available at the lowest possible price. Royalties from the British edition are being divided among the three causes with which the book is mainly concerned:

Relief for Continental Churches

Orphaned Missions

The World Council of Churches

H. P. V. D.

Union Theological Seminary

New York

New Year's Day, 1943

# Query

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WHAT IS THE CHURCH DOING?





# *What Is the*

## *Church Doing?*

THESE DAYS ARE TAXING TO THE LAST limit the optimism and hope of many. We live in a world which appears to be breaking in pieces before our eyes. Small wonder that many are returning to the familiar and somber forecast of Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Secretary, on the eve of the last World War. Having labored all through those fateful days in last desperate efforts to avert the catastrophe, he was standing one evening at his office window in Downing Street as dusk crept over London and the street lights flickered on one by one. Turning to an associate he said, "The lights are going out all over Europe tonight. We shall hardly see them rekindled in our lifetime."

• • ii

From many sides the question presses, "What is the Church doing?" Not infrequently it is asked with a shrug of the shoulders and a slightly altered inflection which suggests its own answer, "What is the Church doing?"

Those who seek to speak in behalf of the Church must answer with modesty and with scrupulous fidelity to fact. They know only too well what Christianity cannot accomplish. Twice in the lifetime of most of us, we have seen it impotent to avert world conflict embroiling vir-

tually all humanity. This is no time for exaggerated and self-congratulatory claims on behalf of the Christian Church.

Moreover it is obvious that an answer cannot be found in the life of any single congregation, or Communion, or the Church of any one nation. The only Church which could hold any considerable importance for today's world would be the whole Church of Christ throughout the whole world. Two decades and more ago that great prophet of a reunited World Christianity, the late Bishop Brent, cried out, "The world is too strong for a divided Church!" In that day this was the passionate protest of an unusually sensitive spirit, disheartened at the wastage of division and duplications. Today that is a sober statement of fact. *This world is too strong for a divided Church. We repeat: the only Church which could hold much significance in the face of our world today is—the whole-Church-of-Christ-throughout-the-whole-world.*

Has even that? In a world breaking asunder under our eyes, what as a matter of fact is the Christian Church doing?

The purpose of this book is to seek a partial answer to that question, not in theories or claims, but in facts. In the space available we can examine only a few of the myriad facets of the Christian Church in the world. We shall direct our inquiry to three spheres: first, the Churches of the European Continent; then, the youngest Christian Churches; and finally, the movement of World Christianity as a whole.

# *Answer*

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1. THE CHURCHES IN CAPTIVITY

2. THE YOUNGEST CHRISTIAN  
CHURCHES

3. THE WORLD CHURCH



# 1.

## *The Churches in Captivity*

WHAT IS HAPPENING AMONG THE CHRISTIAN Churches in captivity, in Continental countries enduring unspeakable subjugation and persecution? Here, what *is* the Church doing?

Only those to whom there comes week by week a steady flow of reports from those lands, many of them highly confidential, can fully appreciate the sweep and depth and heroism of that story. Much of it cannot now be told. From each of the enslaved nations—from Norway and Denmark, from Holland and Belgium, from France and Czechoslovakia and the Balkans, even from Germany—come closely parallel reports of threefold developments—passive but daring and effective *resistance*, spiritual *revival*, indomitable *resolution*.

### *i*

In *Norway*, as in Germany in the early years of the Nazi regime, only the leaders of the Christian Church have stood forth unitedly in public protest and action against the more serious offenses of the Nazi-dominated administration.

It began shortly after the overrunning of Scandinavia in April 1940 and the attempts to set up a Quisling government. In the first weeks the Church leaders were reassured by the conciliatory promises of Hitler and his Reichskommissar. But very soon the true character of the occupation began to appear. In January 1941, the bishops of the Church of Norway protested to the Ministry of Church and Education against certain specified offenses such as "the systematic rule of terror by the Nazi Storm Troopers" and "the interference with the ministers' pledge of silence" in their private relations with their parishioners, "a privacy which has been one of the foundations of the life of the Church and of the pastoral calling in every Christian country." When their representations brought only threats of repression, the bishops submitted a further declaration outlining the bases of the Church's stand. Then, knowing that it would receive no notice from official sources, they embodied it in an Encyclical Letter read from most of the pulpits of Norway despite police proscription and circulated by the thousands in leaflet form. Their statement said in part:

"When there is interference with our duty to obey our Lord Jesus Christ we are inevitably forced to take a stand. . . . Justice, truth, goodness which the Church considers to be possible in a state ruled by law are among the ordinances of God. . . . Where the commandments of God are at stake, which are the basis of all common living, the Church is obliged to render clear witness. . . .

"When the government tolerates violence and injustice and brings pressure to bear on the souls of men, then the Church is the guardian of conscience. . . .

"The Church cannot keep silence where the commandment of God is broken and sin reigns. . . . On the basis of our mandate we exhort all those in places of authority to make an end to all that goes against the holy will of God which is justice, truth, liberty of conscience, and goodness, and to build on the law of God."

For more than a year, it was the Church leaders principally who prevented Quisling's appointment as Chancellor. When Germany launched her assault on Russia, the strongest pressure was exerted to win the support of the Norwegian people by having the Church proclaim the attack a Crusade against Communism. To arguments and threats alike the Christian statesmen returned a determined silence.

Resistance continued indomitable until a new and more menacing crisis in the spring of 1942. A series of attempts by Quisling, now formally in office, to discredit and displace the bishops led them unitedly to resign their state appointments, but not their spiritual office and authority. They with certain prominent pastors were then deposed and placed in concentration camps or confinement.

At this point the clergy of the Church took up the struggle. In a dramatic united action on Easter Day all but an insignificant minority announced their resignations from their state benefices, involving their salaries, their homes, their security. A Pastoral Letter read in over 1,000 of the 1,100 Lutheran pulpits at the Easter morning service reaffirmed the stand of the Norwegian Church:

"We declare that it is our highest duty to God and to man to preach God's word entire and unchanged for our comfort, for guidance in life, and for our salvation after death without regard to those to whom it may be displeasing. Here we stand by God's command, servants of the Church, and we therefore cannot without the ruling of the Church receive instructions on how God's word should be preached in any particular circumstances. . . . No earthly power or authority can make conditions contrary to the order of the Church, or to our right to do the work of God, or to serve as preachers of the Gospel. We proclaim the freedom of the word of God and we declare that we are bound by that word. . . .

"Our Lord and Savior has Himself founded His Church and it can never become a tool of any earthly authority. . . . The Church cannot tolerate that any authority should for political or worldly reasons deprive a duly ordained servant of the Church not only of his post but also of his vocation to serve by word and sacrament. . . . Every priest must be true to his priestly oath and thus obey God rather than man. . . .

"If worldly powers break in and wish to destroy the vital foundations of the Christian school, the Christian home, or Christian social work, then their interference strikes simultaneously at the whole Church and at each of its limbs. If anyone without just cause is persecuted and arrested for the sake of his faith, then the Church is the guardian of the freedom of his conscience and stands at his side. . . . We testify to our solidarity with all the limbs of the Church. . . ."

Efforts of the Quisling officials to persuade or bully the Norwegian clergy into collaboration, and to enlist and ordain Nazi sympathizers to take the place of the recalcitrant ministers, have been almost without avail. Only

twenty-seven of the 1,100 pastors are reported to have failed to follow the lead of their bishops. When the Church Department of the Government issued an ultimatum ordering the protesting clergy to continue in their state functions, two obeyed. A further move seeking to persuade the ministers of the numerically small but independent Free Church groups to take over the Lutheran Churches prevailed with only one man. On the contrary the Free Church clergy offered their own places of worship for the use of the Lutheran pastors and congregations. Thus an incidental result of the conflict has been the drawing together of all Protestant forces into a united front.

Within a very few weeks, the State Department for Church Affairs sent a new communication to all pastors inviting them to resume their work "as before," apparently without restrictions.

Then, on July 26th, a still more decisive step was taken. Authoritative leaders of the Church proclaimed complete severance of all relations with the State. Again, under direct pressure from Hitler, Quisling rescinded measures against the Church. Those who have watched the strategy of religious repression in Germany over the past decade will hardly harbor confidence that this action assures independence for the Church or the cessation of Quisling's designs upon it. It does mean that, thus far, the authorities have failed to accomplish their will against the united and resolute passive resistance of the Christian populace. Quisling's newspaper declares, "The Christian Front is the hardest to conquer."

Rightly to appraise this stand one must remember that the Church of Norway is a State Church, and, moreover, that it is a Lutheran Church with Lutheranism's tradition of subservience by the ecclesiastical to the political authority.

In Norway, as so generally where the basic liberties of men are under assault, freedom to preach and freedom to teach wage a common battle. Church and school stand or succumb together. Indeed, a major charge in the pastors' indictment of the Quisling authorities is the intimidation and persecution of school teachers. Nine thousand out of the 10,500 Norwegian schoolmasters rebelled against the enlistment of school children in the Quisling youth movement and their own compulsory enrollment in the Quisling Teachers' Union. In retaliation some three hundred of the more independent teachers were removed, forcibly deported to the far north on a dangerously unsafe boat and there put to hard labor. Dr. Gustaf Aulen, Swedish bishop and eminent leader in ecumenical Christian advance, preaching in Stockholm in celebration of Norwegian National Day, thus vividly portrayed their fate:

"A ship sailed to the northward. She was a battered craft. She was far overloaded. Such carelessness might mean that her load was not valuable, not so valuable that the risk of her being lost could not be faced with equanimity. But it was a noble load—the noblest that could be loaded in any ship. It was hundreds of Norwegian school teachers, many of them grown grey in the service of their schools. They were on their way to hard labor far away in the north. Their crime was that they

had not wavered in their defense of the right of Norwegian children to be brought up as Norwegians."

Again united action appears to have prevailed. The school teachers have been invited to resume their posts. Their membership in the Teachers' Association is to be on the express condition that the Association will impose no political propaganda upon them.

However, this has not fully settled the issue. Apparently the school children themselves are now taking a leaf from the book of their mentors. They are threatening to strike by remaining away from school unless the teachers who have been imprisoned, including those deported to the north, are released and reinstated.

In this whole program of resistance, the moving spirit has been the Bishop of Oslo and Primate of the Church of Norway, Dr. Eyvind Berggrav. The Stockholm correspondent of the *New York Times* reports: "Quisling regards Bishop Berggrav as his greatest enemy and obstacle." Yet the Bishop has engaged in no direct political activity. He and his colleagues have merely insisted upon the freedom of the Christian Church to preach the truth of their Gospel and to teach Norwegian youth Christian truth.

Soon after his dismissal, Bishop Berggrav was summoned to appear before Quisling at the Royal Palace in Oslo. After a long interrogation, Quisling finally lost his temper and blurted out, "You triple traitor. You deserve to be beheaded." The Primate replied quietly, "Well, here I am."

Bishop Aulen of Sweden, in the address just cited,

describes the Primate's present situation: "I see Eyvind Berggrav confined in a small remote hut. There is barbed wire outside. A band of men, armed with rifles, pistols, and truncheons, mount guard over the dangerous prisoner who prays for his people, and strengthens his spirit with the Word of Life."

A more intimate and revealing portrait of the man comes from a Norwegian who had escaped from a Nazi prison camp in Norway and made his way to England. After describing three fellow-prisoners of remarkably diverse temperaments and contrasted reactions to their sufferings, he goes on:

"I am drawing particular attention to them because I often went with them to Holy Communion when Bishop Berggrav visited us. The Primate . . . almost transformed these three men by his influence. He fortified them with something deeper and greater than pride, scorn and hate. He gave them more courage than they possessed. The Bishop's influence went right through the prison. He made us realize that in our helpless state our spirit was our only shield and sword. And yet we never heard from him one word of hate, scorn or reproof of the Germans. He never taught us to resist or rebel; but he gave us courage and spirit. No wonder the Church of Norway and the people look up to him and follow his leadership. His spirit is so great that it will lead Norway to victory whatever the Nazis do to him."

There is a window into the inner secret of this amazing stand by the Bishop, his colleagues and his people.

It is a moving picture which John Steinbeck has given in *The Moon is Down*. In many ways it is an authentic

picture. But there is one strange omission, so characteristic of the modern "intellectual." His Norwegian village contains no church, and his characters include no village pastor. Yet in most of the villages of Norway it is the Church under the leadership of its Lutheran minister which is the very heart of resistance.

Widely among the Norwegian people, religious renewal is taking place. The manifesto of July 26, 1942, which proclaimed the Church's independence of the State, reports:

"Never before in our generation have so many of our people sought God's House. . . . Every observant preacher rejoices to see God's Word received with renewed interest. From all quarters of our country we hear of great awakenings, quiet, strong and deeply impressive awakenings. God has visited our people with grace. . . . Even those sections of our people who have previously stood apart from the Church and Christendom are now beginning to discover the Church; they respect it and are beginning to look towards it. Here also we see God's work, and give thanks for the favour that has befallen us."

ii

*Denmark* did not resist the initial Nazi thrust. Theoretically her people are still free. Her King "reigns" from the confinement of the Royal Palace.

Inevitably there has been somewhat less pressure upon the Danish Churches than in formally occupied lands. And less marked evidence of the developments which persecution has brought forth. But the sympathies of

the Danish Christians have been deeply engaged by the trials and sufferings of comrades in Norway with whom ties of racial and spiritual kinship are so intimate. In recent months, quite inadvertently, indications that in Denmark also the Church is a center of effective resistance have been seeping across the borders. As in all Lutheran countries vigorous efforts were put forth to have the Church declare the assault upon Russia a Holy Crusade. In Denmark, hardly less than in Norway, these efforts appear to have fallen flat. Testimony to the staunch courage and unity of the Danish Christians comes from a source which can hardly be questioned. An anonymous Danish clergyman of obviously pro-Nazi allegiance protests against prevailing attitudes within his Church:

"Considering the hatred which the Danish Church displays against Germany, one would gain the impression that the outrages against the clergy in Russia are insignificant compared with the crimes committed by the 'new era' men in Germany and Norway. In the Danish Church there are several instances of clergymen being persecuted because they refused to take part in anti-German plots. If a clergyman praises the young Danes who are staking their lives on the East Front in Denmark's fight against Bolshevism, profound indignation is stirred. He is shouted at as a 'Nazi swine' and threatened with economic reprisals. There is something rotten in the Danish Church."

In the meantime Denmark is stirring with a revival which is at once religious and national. It centers in a return to the teachings of the great Danish theologian

and patriot of the nineteenth century, Grundtvig, originator of the system of folk high schools which have been so widely studied, admired and copied throughout the world. The leaders of the nation are finding themselves under compulsion to rethink the bases of national life and the forces which create and sustain corporate existence under every external assault and amidst disintegration within. The significance of the Church for the life of a people, and especially the right relations of Church and State, have been preoccupying attention with an urgency unknown in recent decades.

iii

*Belgium* is of course a predominantly Roman Catholic country. Here the record of the late Cardinal Mercier in the Last War had left a heritage of firm, valiant and shrewd non-cooperation with the conquerors.

Again leadership in spiritual resistance has fallen to the Primate of Belgium, Cardinal Van Roey, Archbishop of Mechelen (Malines). A man of few words and phlegmatic temperament, the Cardinal was an untried quantity when occupation began. The Nazis had put him down as no considerable obstacle after his great predecessor. His methods are less spectacular, less likely to draw the world's acclaim, but perhaps hardly less effective. Against the activities of Belgian fifth columnists, he has forbidden his priests to give communion to any pro-German in uniform or even to say masses for those killed as traitors. Against the German attempt to take over the educational system, he has ordered schools and uni-

versities closed. Against the effort to divide his people by setting Flemings against Walloons, he has proclaimed the indestructible unity and destiny of the Belgian nation. While recognizing the traditional Catholic position of adapting itself to all governments which protect liberty of conscience, he has declared, "but as for adapting herself to governments that oppress the rights of conscience and persecute the Catholic Church, the answer must be—No! Never!" . . . "The Belgian fatherland continues to exist and all its children owe it loyalty and service. . . . Intelligence and good sense help us to find our way to confidence and resistance, because we are certain that our country will be restored and will rise again."

In the meantime, the small Protestant forces are experiencing quickening of life and loyalty. "After the shock of May 1940, the churches rapidly pulled themselves together and they have held fast through many heavy trials. . . . War and its rigors—privations and hunger, uncertainty and fear in face of the future—bring many and constant temptations to which some have unfortunately succumbed. We must, however, thank God that in general the life of the Church has not slackened and that it has even made progress here and there. . . . Amid the great human distress the need for God makes itself more strongly felt. Men are coming to our churches who are thirsty for certainty and spirituality, who are open to the action of Christ, and who have passed through decisive experiences."

The attempt to claim Belgian young people for the

Nazi-inspired youth movement has met not only disdain but the launching of a positive Christian alternative. Two years after the great World Conference of Christian Youth at Amsterdam on the eve of the War, the first Belgian Ecumenical Youth Congress was assembled in Antwerp at Whitsuntide 1941. Six young men were responsible for the organization of the Congress. It drew together almost a hundred young people, a majority men, representing a wide variety of Churches and Christian movements. Amsterdam had taken as its keynote "Christus Victor"; the youth at Antwerp proclaimed their rallying-cry "Christus Liberator." The general theme was examined in relation to the concrete problems of Belgian youth in the present hour. "Enthusiastic letters of appreciation have led the organizers to decide that a second Congress must be held in 1942."

*iv*

In *France*, riven into two largely unconnected areas by the forces of occupation, the Churches have maintained not only life and work but even a sound financial position. Within a year after their nation's collapse, many essential foods had risen 400 per cent in price and were increasingly unobtainable; yet the salaries of the Protestant pastors, always inadequate, remained unchanged. Today their value is something less than \$350 a year. A visitor from the World Christian Movement staff observes, "To the foreigner who visits France it remains a mystery how pastors can live on such pitifully small sums when prices continue to rise."

Churches in the unoccupied zone succeeded not only in meeting their own budgets but even in sending assistance across the forbidden line to their more hard-pressed brethren under occupation. More than that, *as in every other one of the lands in captivity*, the French churches have continued to raise for foreign missionary work as much as or more than in normal times.

Through an action which now seems Providential, negotiations of more than a decade were consummated early in 1939 which united virtually all Protestant bodies into a single Reformed Church of France—the last major reunion to be effected within World Christianity before the storm broke. Thus French Protestantism has been able to speak to the nation and to the Government with a single voice and to bring its full resources to bear unitedly upon the unforeseen exigencies of humiliation and despair. The new Church chose as its first President the man who had been the moving spirit in steps towards reunion, a Vice-Chairman of the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches and a colorful and beloved figure in all world Christian gatherings of recent decades, Pastor Marc Boegner. From improvised headquarters at Nîmes, he and his colleagues are continuously in touch not only with their widely dispersed congregations but also with Christian Churches of other lands and with a Government to which vigorous representations must frequently be directed.

The French Protestant leaders have been hardly more concerned with the health of their churches than with overshadowing issues of national policy and destiny. Here

two questions especially preoccupy them—the future of French youth and the persecution of the Jews.

Shortly after French capitulation a group of former cavalry officers, moved by the conviction that the only hope for the future lay in a new generation of French youth, founded a Youth Leaders Training Institute with a strongly anti-totalitarian philosophy. Here leaders from all types of youth movements came for periods of training. They joined in manual work together; they met other classes of the population; they were schooled in what has been described as “spiritual preparation for the task of rebuilding the nation.” Christians have had a major part in this project.

In the autumn of 1941, a Protestant Youth Council embracing the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., the Boy Scouts, the Girl Guides and the Student Christian Movement was formed under the chairmanship of Pastor Boegner. What aims, it may be asked, can such a movement profess under the present French administration? “The essential aim . . . is to lead the young people who are members to recognize their Savior in Jesus Christ as the Bible reveals Him. This message is addressed to all people, *whatever their race or origin.*”<sup>1</sup> The work of the constituent Movements is defined as fourfold—physical education, vocational education, cultural education, civic education. Two paragraphs are especially revealing:

“This education is also international, and teaches the young people to understand and to love what is foreign to them, to recognize themselves to be responsible mem-

<sup>1</sup> Italics mine.

bers of the great human community in all its families, each of which must contribute by its own specific gifts to harmony and peace. As they work in this direction, the Movements are resolutely opposed to everything that might tend to give youth a uniform culture in the service of a totalitarian nationalism which would systematically exclude or hate everything foreign to the French nation. The legitimate pride of the French nation cannot lead them to exalt it beyond measure at the expense of others. . . .

"They give their members respect for the State and its chief, and the desire to work with all their strength for the liberation and revival of the country. . . . The Bible, however, teaches us that obedience to the State is limited as well as motivated by obedience to God. The Movements in the Protestant Youth Council teach their members that obedience to a human lord can in no case be put before obedience to the sole Lord of Heaven and earth. If there is a conflict between the order of the State and the order of God, it is preferable for a Christian to suffer anything rather than betray his Lord. Concretely this implies the definite rejection of all totalitarian ideologies, which in any case are fundamentally foreign to the French tradition. It also demands that youth should be put on its guard against any infiltration of these ideologies into a wounded France which cannot find its salvation except by being true to itself."

The constituent Movements have steadily ignored instructions from the authorities to discriminate against Jewish and foreign members. As a practical expression of their purpose, many members have taken up residence within the internment camps for refugees to share their hunger and privation and to minister to their destitution.

Against the anti-Semitic regulations instituted by the Vichy authorities, Protestant Church leaders were the first to enter clear, unequivocal and repeated protests. Dr. Boegner wrote to the Grand Rabbi of France:

"The National Council of the Reformed Church of France . . . has charged me to express to you the pain which we all feel at seeing Racial Legislation introduced into our country and at observing the innumerable trials and injustices which it imposes on the French Jews. . . .

"Our Church . . . feels an ardent sympathy for your Community. . . . It has already undertaken, and will not cease to pursue, negotiations with a view to a recasting of the Law which is absolutely necessary. . . .

"Between your Communities and the Churches of the Reformation there exists a bond which men cannot break."

It was in connection with the wholesale deportation of Jewish refugees, however, that both Protestant and Catholic leaders have taken the strongest position in direct opposition to the Pétain-Laval regime. The soul of the entire Christian community has been deeply stirred by horror and indignation at these inhuman measures. Dr. Boegner concluded a reiterated appeal to Marshal Pétain in behalf of the Jews with a direct reference to the opinion of the World Church:

"As President of a Council of Christian Churches which includes all great Christian Churches with the exception of the Roman Catholic Church,<sup>2</sup> I am forced to inform you of the deep emotion felt in Swiss, Swedish

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Boegner here refers to his position as Chairman of the Administrative Committee of the World Council of Churches.

and American churches in face of the events now occurring in France with which the entire world is acquainted.

"I beg you to dictate the indispensable measures in order that France may not inflict upon herself a moral defeat of unfathomable weight."

It has not been deemed advisable for the Church as a whole to make formal pronouncements on the underlying issues of the present regime. But a group of very influential pastors and laymen, largely stimulated by similar declarations from other branches of the World Church, drafted a manifesto of eight theses which fairly reflects the viewpoint of foremost French Protestants. Anglo-Saxons who read this and similar pronouncements must bear in mind the Continental habit of clothing ethical judgments in theological verbiage, and also that such declarations must suggest what cannot be explicitly stated and are directed to readers who have learned well to discern what is written between the lines. Among the theses proposed are these:

"I. There is only one Lord of the Church and the world, Jesus Christ, Savior and King. . . .

"II. The Church as a community has responsibility to pass judgment on the concrete situation of the State or the Nation every time that the commandments of God (which are the basis of all common life) are at stake. . . .

"V. The Church recognizes the authority of the State as being willed by God for the common good. . . .

"VI. . . . The Church recalls that the mission of the State is to ensure to each citizen a just order which guarantees essential liberties and excludes any unjust discrimination, and any arbitrary procedure, especially in the sphere of justice and police.

"VII. On the basis of the Bible, the Church recognizes

Israel as the people whom God chose to give a Savior to the world and to be in the midst of the nations a standing witness to the mystery of his faithfulness. . . . The Church raises a solemn protest against any legislation which throws the Jews outside human society.

"viii. Repudiating all equivocation, the Church affirms that the inevitable submission to the conqueror cannot be represented as an act of free consent."

In the meantime a powerful "resistance movement" works anonymously but tirelessly, largely under Christian leadership with Protestants and Catholics, professors, clergy and workers, in intimate collaboration. Its secretly published paper prints 44,000 copies but has a much larger reading public. In this connection a series of *Pamphlets of Christian Witness* is being issued, mainly from the pen of an unnamed Catholic priest. The introduction thus defines their aim:

"Our activity is entirely intended to defend the Christian faith; it is human and religious. It aims above all at providing an honest, solid, authentic documentation. It seeks to inform consciences and awaken souls in face of one of the greatest perils that faith in Christ has ever had to undergo."

Typical numbers quote extensively from Christian pronouncements against totalitarianism in other lands, expose the racial and pagan philosophies of current attacks upon French Christianity, and inveigh against anti-Semitism. They summon Christians to a united front of spiritual resistance "of which the active and silent presence will bar the way to any attempt to enslave and dishonor France."

No account of France today, however cursory, can omit some mention of that great segment of her menfolk—close to 1,500,000—who are exiled from fellowship and labor in her behalf in prison-camps and work camps in Germany. This is notably true of the life of her churches. Among the prisoners, both Catholics and Protestants, currents of spiritual renewal and deepening are quietly but powerfully in flow. In several camps congregations for regular worship, Bible study, educational lectures and practical service have been organized. These are self-designated "Churches in captivity." A prison chaplain writes to express gratitude for hymn books, study books, materials descriptive of the Ecumenical Movement and above all, Bibles which had been provided by the American Bible Society through the World Council of Churches. He reports that study among his parishioners in the preceding half year has centered on the prophetic books of the Old Testament and St. Paul but has also embraced John Calvin and three current books in theology. "We have studied 'Anglicanism and Eastern Orthodoxy; at present we are having a series of studies on Missions. . . . Thanks to the material you have sent us, we have been able to present the problem of unity to large audiences in three lectures entitled 'What the Church Means,' 'The History of Ecumenism,' 'Future Prospects.' . . . We hope you have received the sum of 100 marks offered at our Christmas service on behalf of your work."

An officers' camp describes an exhibition organized by the prisoners "to recall the beloved homeland." At the center was placed a section celebrating the spiritual

foundations of French life with a tiny room for Catholic France and another for Protestant France.

"One third of the room where visitors were not allowed to walk about was transformed into a chapel. In the center were the Holy Table and the lectern with the Bible, both made by us in camp and used for our services. The Summary of the Law and some Bible verses were painted on the walls. A 'stained glass' window made with colored paper had a great Cross as its central motif, with a bunch of grapes and an ear of wheat on either side as symbols of Communion. . . .

"On the other wall, there were a large Huguenot cross, the profiles of Luther and Calvin, and a verse from the Bible, all carved in wood by a prisoner."

Through the endless months of exile, idleness and hunger some at least of the French prisoners are doing even more than maintaining and rekindling the fires of spiritual devotion. One group has discovered the meaning of the Church and from that discovery has been moved to formulate a reverent yet burning critique of the life of the Reformed Churches with their excessive confidence in preaching and their anti-Roman underestimate of the significance of the Lord's Supper. We can quote only a few sentences:

"MESSAGE FROM THE PRESBYTERIAL COUNCIL  
OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST WHICH IS AT OFLAG II D  
TO THE REFORMED CHURCH OF FRANCE

"Exile has made us realize more acutely the demands for faith and the practical consequences involved in these closely linked articles of the Creed: 'I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints'. . . .

"Captivity has been a grace for us all. It has made us understand that, although materially separated, we are not a simple collection of individual believers from all parts of France, but the Church in a war prison camp. Borne up by this certainty, we are urged to address the following message to the Reformed Church of France: It is impossible for the Christian to draw near to God in Jesus Christ without re-discovering the meaning of the Church which is the body of the Lord. It is impossible for the Christian to re-discover the meaning of the Church as the Body of the Lord without confessing the sin of the division of the visible Church and working with his whole strength for the unity of the Church; the Church of France first, as the prelude to the union of all the Churches which claim the name of Jesus Christ. . . .

"If the Church is the Body of the Lord, must we not communicate more often by the Supper in His Body and in His Blood? If the Church exists where the Word is declared, and if the Word declared is the Word made flesh, must not the Table of the Lord be set up more often in our Church? . . .

"The problem of religious teaching has seemed to us bound up with the practice of the Christian life: the problem of learning not to separate the Bread of Life in the Word preached from the Bread of Life which is the Supper distributed."

v

Since the uprooting of the Church in Russia after the Revolution of 1917, the *Balkan* lands became preeminently the territory of Eastern Orthodoxy. In Greece, in Bulgaria, in Jugoslavia, in Rumania there were vigorous national churches of Orthodox faith and many communities of exiled Russians as well as Roman Catholic and

Protestant groups of varying size and strength. But within this area of political intrigue, racial hatred and deeply rooted national antagonisms which have given it for half a century the name of the "tinder-box of Europe," the religious situation was hardly less confused and unhappy. Religious persecutions of the most severe kind were commonplace. Roman Catholics, where strong enough, sought to oust Eastern Orthodox. The latter all too widely persecuted the small and struggling Protestant groups. All alike feared and fought Communism, and were in turn its victims. To this maelstrom of contending forces have now been added the lashing and rending tempests of total war. News which escapes from the Balkans is fragmentary, but it sketches a picture in dark shadows of cruelty, strife and death relieved only by flashes of great heroism.

*Croatia* harbors a population of some 5,000,000 Roman Catholics and 1,800,000 Orthodox Serbs. Since its conquest by Italy, the latter are suffering cruelly at the hands of their Catholic fellow-Christians. One bishop and a considerable number of priests have been killed. Many more have been imprisoned or exiled. Victims of the persecution are estimated at several thousands of whom perhaps a tenth have suffered death. Orthodox religious services are no longer permitted.

In *Serbia* the aged Patriarch, Gavril Dozitch, who stood forth so conspicuously in support of young King Peter when he seized the throne from pro-Nazi Serbs in March 1941 and who wielded a unique influence in

rallying the Serb people to their monarch's support, has been imprisoned in Belgrade; his death has been repeatedly rumored. A puppet church administration parallels the puppet government and seeks to win the peasants to collaboration. On the other hand, the militant Bishop Nikolai Velimirovitch, removed from office, has sought exile in the mountains with the indomitable guerilla forces under General Mikhailovitch and urges unyielding resistance.

Archbishop Chrysantos, Primate of the *Greek* Orthodox Church, has been deposed because of his opposition to the new regime. Mount Athos with its center of monasteries is isolated without privilege of communication, and suffers in the general food shortage which threatens starvation for all Greece.

In *Bulgaria*, on the other hand, Orthodox forces are busily engaged in assisting the reconstruction of Orthodox Churches in German-occupied Russia. At the same time, the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A. and the Student Christian Movement, all with long records of notable service to Bulgarian youth, have been dissolved by the Nazi-dominated Government.

The Orthodox of *Rumania* are also active in restoring churches lately recovered from Russia. Meanwhile the German Lutheran Church of that country has adopted the most extreme Nazi interpretation of Christianity, advocating the elimination of the Old Testament and the recovery of the "God-given torch of the Nordic

Aryan vision of life." The Transylvanian Reformed Church struggles to recover from bifurcation suffered under new territorial arrangements.

This somber recountal from Southeastern Europe may well conclude with a brief report of highest fortitude from that land which was first to feel the Nazi scourge and has steadily shown all others an example of inflexible fidelity. In *Czechoslovakia*, Christians stand firm amid fierce repressions. "The Churches have become the bastions of the new Czechoslovak liberty. An ever increasing number of people come to the weekday and Sunday services to be fortified in their faith in the divine right to live as free people again when this thunderstorm shall have passed," declares a Czech spokesman. The Lutheran Church of *Slovakia*, heretofore the center of intellectual and spiritual vitality but financially dependent upon the State, is now under attack from the new Roman Catholic puppet administration and fights for its life. Loyal members rally to its support; popular collections yielded twice the highest expectation. In *Ruthenia* the Orthodox bishop has been imprisoned, a "campaign of annihilation" attempted. Scanty news from *Bohemia* and *Moravia* discloses that the churches pursue their work with vigor and success. Despite the closing of all seminaries, theological literature continues to appear. There is not the slightest evidence that churchmen took any direct part in the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich. But his avengers know well that Christian faith was a dynamic cause of the unyielding resistance which issued in his death; a Catholic Dean and a Protestant pastor and his

wife stood together before the Gestapo firing-squad. Intensified persecution of the Church is reported. Meanwhile, the leaders of the Czechoslovak Republic in Exile renew firm grip on the genius of their nation :

"No man can live in Czechoslovakia for long without realising that its democratic way of life has deep religious roots. . . . Masaryk interpreted the religious apostasy of modern man as the main cause of suicidal and homicidal mania, leading to men's attempts either to kill themselves or to become mass-murderers. He believed that Jesus and not Caesar is the Redeemer of suffering humanity, and that His law of love should be translated into dynamic action in all departments of human life. I also share this living faith of Masaryk." (President Benes at the Czechoslovak Institute, London, June 22, 1942.)

*vi*

From *Germany* itself, reports are necessarily more carefully guarded. But there is clear evidence that the unintimidated thought and action which brought such glory to Pastor Niemoeller and his associates in the years before the War not only continue but strengthen in clarity of vision and firmness of resolve.

Open conflict between Church and Government intensifies as Nazi tentacles tighten their hold both more widely and more crushingly upon the life of the churches, and also as ultimate Nazi intentions towards Christianity are more blatantly revealed. These are some of the counts in the indictment declared by Church leaders. Religious instruction in higher schools has been abolished. Church kindergartens have been closed. Distribution of Christian

literature among the soldiers is forbidden. Religious publication has been almost suppressed; although not more than 1½ per cent of all German periodicals were religious, 95 per cent of those forbidden to continue publication because of an alleged paper shortage were in this category. Freedom of worship has been compromised. Religious orders and societies have been abolished; Y.M.C.As. suppressed; convents, monasteries and theological seminaries confiscated. Pastoral work in hospitals is constricted. Taxes for the support of the churches are jeopardized. A considerable number of Protestant pastors are in concentration camps and many more are forbidden to preach. Eighty-six per cent of the Confessional Church clergy have been called into the Army. Most abhorrent of all to the Christian conscience, the practice of euthanasia (the systematic killing of the infirm, the incurable and the insane) continues. Against all of these offenses against the freedom, the honor and the conscience of the Church, Christian leaders have entered emphatic and reiterated public protest.

In recent months, however, their concern has been more deeply stirred and their resistance hardened by disclosures of fundamental Nazi designs upon the Christian Church.

First, through the indiscretion of a Nazi official, came the discovery of a document emanating from the Brown House in Munich and setting forth the policy to be pursued towards the Church when the Party should be free to carry through its full intentions. By prohibitions and controls it would reduce the Church to an innocu-

ous sect imprisoned within its own buildings and barred from influence upon public life.

Then came the publication of a book, *The Reich as a Task*, by Friedrich Schmidt, Vice Gauleiter of Württemberg and educational director in Rosenberg's office, which received official approval of the Nazi Party "for the protection of National Socialist literature." The writer proclaims the task of superseding the "spiritual and political community-idea which has lasted for nearly two thousand years" by the new National Socialist idea. In particular, the idea of a Universal Church propagated by Christianity and the idea of Humanity breeding liberalism and Marxism must be extirpated.

In similar vein is a handbook for soldiers distributed in an edition of 180,000 copies, *God and Nation: A Soldier's Creed*, which declares: "Today the question is not to weaken Catholicism, to strengthen Protestantism, but to replace a religion which is foreign to us by a faith born from the depths of the German soul. . . . Two ages, two signs confront each other today: the Cross and the Sword. . . . We cannot live two different faiths. In our heart there is room for only one faith, one creed: Germany! . . . I believe in the strong God and in his Eternal Germany."

Even more authoritative is a document written and signed by Martin Borman, successor of Rudolf Hess as Leader of the Nazi Party. "The National Socialist point of view is irreconcilable with the Christian. . . . If we National Socialists speak about 'faith in God' we do not mean the same God as the naïve Christians and their clerical exploiters. . . . The natural Force which main-

tains the innumerable planets in the universe we call the Almighty, or God. . . . We set before ourselves the aim of living as far as possible by the light of nature, that is to say by the law of life. . . . From this irreconcilability of National Socialist and Christian views it follows that any strengthening of Christian churches is to be rejected. . . . The people must be wrested from the churches and their priests."

Against both practices and theories which imperil the very existence of Christianity, a numerically small but eminent and influential body of Church leaders has thrown the full weight of voice and action. In Germany the stand of Roman Catholics has been more united and certainly no less determined and effective than that of Protestants. Indeed increasingly the policies and protests of the two groups have moved on parallel lines and, in recent months, even in direct collaboration.

In the first years of Hitler's regime, the figure which stood forth with that of Martin Niemöller was the intrepid and saintly Cardinal Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich. Latterly the Cardinal, reputedly seriously broken in health, has been driven into virtual retirement. But on the last day of 1941 he returned to the Munich Cathedral to give a New Year message to his people. He spoke with special thanksgiving of the happy concord between Catholics and Protestants. "The Christian confessions in our homeland are living in peaceful relationships such as they have not had for a long time. They know that the question for us both today is one of life or death. Today the foundations of Christianity, Holy Scripture and faith in the Messiah of the Gospel are at

stake." He went on to detail the false charges against the Church and the suasion exerted "with increased pressure" upon Christians to forsake the Church. He then voiced his own ringing reply which he urged upon all Christians: "No, and three times No, I will not leave the Church! . . . I will not let myself be blinded by slogans. . . . I will not let myself be forced by violence. . . . I will not let the light be blacked out from me!"

Since Pastor Niemoeller's incarceration and Cardinal Faulhaber's withdrawal, two other figures have stood forth to lead their respective Communions. The press of the free world has acclaimed a series of three forthright sermons preached in the Cathedral of Münster by its bishop, Clemens August, Count von Galen, immediately after his city had suffered heavily from a British air raid. Passing quickly over the recent sufferings "from our opponents in war," he boldly attacked "the inner enemy" (the Gestapo) whose reign of terror had brought it to pass that "no German citizen any longer has any security, and justice has come to be a thing of the past," and whose crimes against citizens and Church "cry to heaven for redress."

Less well known is his direct protest to Hitler. Again detailing the offenses of the Secret Police, the debauching of justice, the prevalence of graft, the Bishop concluded, "I feel myself called and obliged as a German man, as defender of German justice and German liberty, as responsible Bishop of nearly two million German Catholics, to raise my voice regardless of the consequence which may follow to me personally, to accuse the enemies from

within who lead our people and Fatherland to the abyss, and to warn the people and the Government away from the road which according to the experience of history and according to inherent necessity will lead our people and Fatherland, in spite of the heroism of our soldiers and the most glorious victories, to destruction by inner rottenness."

Count von Galen's struggle against Nazi neo-paganism dates from Hitler's seizure of power. It has been waged with utter fearlessness and with shrewd humor. When the Nazis roped off the crowds in the Münster Cathedral Square through which he was to pass at the season of a great festival, he cried from his pulpit, "If anybody thinks that physical force, ropes and police measures are going to separate me from you, or you from me, he is making a serious mistake." On another occasion when his sermon on State interference with family, youth and education was interrupted by a Nazi challenging the right of one who is a celibate to discuss problems of marriage and youth, he retorted at once, "Never will I tolerate in this Cathedral any reflection on our beloved Fuehrer!" His liberalism and dauntless defense of human rights date from long before the emergence of Nazism, indeed from a heritage of many generations. A relative introduced the first article of social legislation ever to be considered by the Reichstag. He himself while a parish priest in Berlin was President of the Workers' Circle.<sup>3</sup> It

<sup>3</sup> See the vivid description of Bishop von Galen as well as other Christian leaders mentioned in this chapter, in Henry Smith Leiper, *Churchmen Who Defy Hitler*, published by The National Conference of Christians and Jews, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York.

is not surprising that recent word from Germany reports his arrest and detention.

The dilemma in which discerning Christian Germans find themselves and the response widely espoused was poignantly set forth in a pastoral letter issued from Fulda in the summer of 1941 by the thirty Roman Catholic bishops with the three German Cardinals at their head. Exposing and challenging the mounting restrictions upon the churches, they declared: "What is at stake is the existence or non-existence of Christianity and the Church in Germany. Recently hundreds of thousands of copies were circulated of a book which makes the assertion that we Germans have today to choose between Christ and the German nation. [The manual for soldiers quoted above.] With flaming protest we German Catholics refuse to make that choice. We love our German nation and serve it if necessary by sacrificing our life. At the same time, however, we live and die for Jesus Christ and wish to belong to Him today and always."

However, as repression intensified and their protests availed nothing, the bishops could not be satisfied to leave the matter there. On March 22, 1942, they had read in Catholic churches throughout Germany another Pastoral Letter which begins: "Dearly Beloved Brethren: For many years now a battle has been raging in Germany against Christianity and the Church to an extent never before experienced." They speak of their repeated protests to the Government culminating in a detailed memorandum submitted on December 10, 1941, requesting an official declaration. Then they go on to the un-

precedented step of quoting their memorandum in full, presumably because it has been utterly ignored by the authorities. Point after point is detailed where the Government has violated the Concordat offered by Hitler to the Roman Church when he came to power. "It is as if the sign of Christ, which is said to have made an appearance in the year 312 out of the Catacombs, had been pushed back again." To these charges of injustice to the Church is added an equally detailed and scathing inventory of violations of the "ordinary rights of mankind"—personal freedom, life including the lives of the feeble and insane, property, honor against lies and slander. This memorandum embodies by all odds the most comprehensive and drastic indictment of the Nazi regime ever published by an official group in Germany. It is reported that a declaration by Protestant leaders was submitted at the same time and in almost identical language.

Meantime, rank-and-file Roman Catholic clergy are more and more outspoken. In predominantly Catholic areas, the priests in smaller towns and villages are said to carry more authority among the people than the local Party Leaders.

Among Protestants, Bishop Wurm of the Evangelical Church of Württemberg has come into special prominence. His address at the Church Assembly of Württemberg was both more explicit in its exposure of Nazi attacks upon the Church and more uncompromising in its Christian intransigence than the stand of any other German in recent months.

Here likewise it would be a great mistake to conceive

of resistance solely in terms of a few especially redoubtable leaders. From *Das Schwarze Korps*, Nazi S. S. organ, comes unintended testimony to the courage and fidelity to principle of an obscure pastor. It is an attack on a woman Lutheran minister, Frau Lic. Staritz of Breslau, because of her spirited defense of the Jewish members of her church and her efforts to protect them against Nazi cruelty. Doubtless her record could be duplicated by the hundreds throughout the Reich. When non-Aryan Christians were compelled to wear the yellow star Protestant pastors in Berlin declared, "Jews must now wear this star, and many are bearing it with pride. Perhaps at a later time we Christians will be forced to bear a yellow cross upon our clothes. Let us be prepared so that we shall bear it with the same pride."

Against the policy of euthanasia, only Church leaders have taken action, most of it necessarily "behind the scenes." It was a Protestant pastor who prepared the first memorandum on the subject; he was immediately clamped into concentration camp. Then an anonymous memorandum was distributed widely and thus a powerful popular opinion was prepared which alone made possible public protests by Church leaders. On Home Mission Sunday, overcrowded churches in Berlin listened to sermons from their pastors developing the thesis: "A nation will be judged by its attitude towards so-called 'hopeless' cases among its people." Latterly Catholics have been associated with Protestants in common action on this matter. The Vatican's clear denunciation of the practice of euthanasia has been widely circulated.

Thus far we have spoken of overt actions of protest,

resistance and non-cooperation, mainly individual in character. But the rôle of Church leaders in seeking the release of their Fatherland from Nazi domination strikes to a far deeper and more drastic level. Since the War's outbreak many of the wisest of them have recognized that military victory for Hitler would portend annihilation for the Church and therefore that their only hope for a free and fair Germany lies through the humiliation of defeat, such defeat for the Nazi rulers as would enable a new leadership to come to power. Since America's ultimate belligerency appeared inevitable, many of them have believed that Nazi defeat was not only desirable but inevitable. For more than a year now, it has been widely known that a strong and resolute anti-Hitler, anti-Nazi movement had formed within German leadership of even the highest ranks and that it was prepared to move to any necessary extremity at an opportune occasion. That movement is composed mainly of elements from three groups—the traditional leadership of the Army, a segment of German labor, and certain leaders within the Christian Churches.

We should hold a very partial understanding of the German Church situation, however, if we pictured it solely in terms of resistance or of groups most active on the public scene. To all Christians in Germany, whatever their view of the rôle of the Church *vis-à-vis* the State, a decade of existence under Nazi domination culminating in a desperate struggle which requisitions every resource and circumscribes every liberty has brought deprivations, trials, perils to faith. For all alike in varying measure,

theirs is a "Church in captivity." That there have been grave losses, especially in the allegiance of youth, cannot be questioned. But that there have also been profound rediscovery of the deeper meanings of Christian faith and moving recommitment of life to its demands is equally certain. When fighting ceases and Christians of the World Church meet again, there is some doubt as to whether those from Germany and from other lands will be able to discover a common language for conference and fellowship, not primarily because they have thought and prayed on opposed sides of the conflict through the bitter years, but because Christians of Germany will speak in accents hewn from depths of travail and testing unknown to fellow-Christians beyond the borders of Axis domination.

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Meanwhile, over every barrier to international communication Christian leaders in Germany are maintaining contact and cherishing fellowship with Christian leaders abroad, even in enemy lands. Yes, in the midst of the conflict and under ruthless pressure from a pagan philosophy determined to bring the world under its domination, they are pressing their study of "the Christian conception of World Order," of "the bases of a just and lasting peace" in collaboration with fellow-Christians throughout the world. In many a pastor's study and small parish group, that study goes steadily forward secretly.

## vii

It is in *The Netherlands*, however, that some of the most notable illustrations of each of the three develop-



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Affairs, resigned because "to reject the Jews is to reject Jesus Christ." The Church's first official protest came in October 1940. Its electrifying effect is described by a Dutch pastor: "October 27, 1940, was a historic day for our Church. The terrible silence in which our Church and our nation had lived for months was broken. The Church which had been silent for so long spoke and showed itself to be a Church which subordinates its own life to its message. The Church and the nation are deeply thankful for this word."

The resolute position has been repeatedly reiterated both in representations to the authorities and in pastoral letters read publicly in the churches. It has also been taken into the marrow of the people as a principle of action. When Jews were ordered to wear the Star of David as a mark of their race and their infamy, large numbers of Christians appeared upon the streets of the Dutch cities with the Star of David upon their lapels. The Dutch Student Christian Movement which has been the nerve-center of Dutch Protestantism for many decades and the Ecumenical Association of enthusiasts for World Christianity have dissolved rather than submit to the exclusion of non-Aryans from their memberships. As would be expected in this Church of John Calvin, strictly theological arguments often furnish the ground for action: "The separation between Jews and non-Jews can in no way be accepted, since it would mean that we would sever our relations with Jesus Christ, Himself born from Israel, of Jewish blood, for Whom there was on this earth no difference between Jew and Greek." Recently the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed

Church renewed its defiance of the occupying authorities and reaffirmed its solidarity with the Jews:

"According to God's providence, the Jews have lived among us for centuries and are bound up with us in a common history and a common responsibility. The commandment of the Savior to love our neighbors refers to them as it does to any other neighbor."

Latterly Roman Catholic leaders have also been taking up a strong position. In August 1941, a pastoral letter signed by the five bishops was read from all Catholic pulpits. A rather amusing illustration of the shrewdness which implements intrepid action attended its proclamation. Early on the appointed Sunday morning, a high Gestapo official, having got wind of its secret distribution to the clergy, waited upon the Archbishop of Utrecht with a demand for the suppression of the letter. The Archbishop replied courteously that he must consult his co-signatories. He withdrew to the telephone. Several times at considerable intervals he returned to apologize for the slowness of the telephone service at such an early hour on Sunday morning. Finally, the Gestapo leader jumped to his feet and shouted that the letter *must* not be read in public. The Archbishop is reported to have sighed as he looked at his watch. "That is regrettable," he said, "for I fear it is now too late. The letter has already been read at all our early Masses."<sup>4</sup> It is of special interest that the Dutch pastoral letter based itself largely upon the 1941 Fulda proclamation of the German hierarchy:

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"We are at one with our German brothers in the Episcopate. On July 6 all twenty-nine bishops of the German Reich . . . declared that the issue is the life or death of Christianity and the Church in Germany. Dear brethren, we have nothing to add to these words; they are ours also."

History is being made in united action by Dutch Protestants and Catholics. First came joint representations to the authorities. Then, on Sunday, April 19, 1942, pastoral letters were read in all churches of both Communion. The opening paragraphs of the Catholic and Protestant documents were identical, symbolizing collaboration in the common struggle:

"The Church feels great concern at the course of events in our country, namely, at the way in which the three basic principles of our national life: justice, charity, and freedom of conscience and conviction, which are anchored in the Christian faith, are being and have been violated. The Church has already given evidence of her attitude to lawlessness, to the merciless treatment of the Jewish section of the population, and to the imposition of the National-Socialist conception of life and of world order, which is directly contrary to the teachings of the Gospel."

The Catholic document then goes on to renew its protest and warning against Nazi labor regulations. The Protestants stress encroachments upon Christian education and upon Christian institutions for the care of the helpless.

The response of the occupying authorities has been ever tighter strangulation. Each successive report from

Holland begins, "The situation is growing worse. Nazi pressure steadily increases." Christian political parties and trade unions have been dissolved. The Christian press has been almost extinguished. Christian youth organizations which have not already dissolved are threatened. Many pastors and professors, including the great missionary leader, Dr. Hendrik Kraemer, and Dr. K. H. E. Gravemeyer, Secretary-General of the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church, are sharing the fate of the most vigorous patriots in concentration camp, some of them in death. Several prominent Churchmen have recently been seized as hostages, and may already have given their lives.

The counter-response of the Protestant Churches is far closer collaboration than they have ever known before, both with Roman Catholics and among themselves, and ever firmer speech and more determined action. "The Church continues to speak. Indeed its witness has become clearer and richer." The young Dutchman whose pessimistic estimate of the health of religion in pre-War Holland was quoted above thus concludes a survey of the Church today:

"There is once more a Church in Holland. It is by no means a perfect Church. . . . But it is a Church on the way towards being the *ecclesia militans*. What most of us in our unbelief had considered impossible has happened. God has sent His breath on the dry bones and we have once more a Mother Church which gives us guidance and consolation, and which holds up our hands in the struggle which is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers of the darkness of this world."

At the same time, the Church assumes an ever more central and vital place within the life of the nation. One pastor writes, "The barrier between the Church and the people has become transparent. The preacher has the feeling in the church service that he not only speaks to the Church people, but that he addresses the nation as a whole. Not only the churchgoer but many who had shown little interest in the Church listen intently and ask: 'What does the Church say?' "

All references to the royal family in public prayer or sermon are forbidden, but the prohibition has never been obeyed. Protestant worshippers throughout Holland repeat each Sunday morning this new prayer of intercession: "We pray Thee for the civil government, for all kings, princes and lords. But especially we pray Thee for the Queen whom Thou hast set over us, and for the authorities of occupation which Thou hast permitted over us." As a correspondent writes, "In 'a cuntry in which people have learned to hear what is said 'between the lines,' the regular use of this prayer takes on added significance."

A trained observer comments, "Nowhere except in the Church can one hear clear language concerning the present situation. . . . Many who had come to think of the Church as an antiquated institution suddenly find it a central factor in the great national struggle and begin to wonder why the Church stands when so many other bodies fall." In Holland, the Church of Christ is resuming its oldtime leadership of the entire nation.

What is the secret of this rebirth of a Church which

is also the spiritual revitalization of a nation? It is largely a return to and reclaiming of the original sources of Dutch Protestantism which were also the tap roots of the Dutch people. It was as a part of the Protestant Reformation that the Dutch nation was born. Two slogans dominated the Eighty Years War for the freedom of the Netherlands, "For the sake of religion" and "For the sake of Liberty." A Dutch Christian emphasizes, "Today, as in the sixteenth century, liberty means above all *spiritual* liberty, and the fight for the nation is above all a fight for the *soul* of the nation."

In this day when "Freedom" is the most universally accepted battle-cry in a struggle for civilization, it is important for Americans to know that not one but two main traditions of "freedom" stand in their background and have woven themselves into the fabric of national consciousness. They are drawn from very different looms and are of sharply contrasted textures. One dates from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the other mainly from the eighteenth and nineteenth. One stems from the Protestant Reformation with its insistence upon the worth of the soul of man *as a child of God*, the other from Modern Romanticism with its demand for the rights of man as a child of Nature. One had its formulation in the Christian Humanism of Erasmus and the stern Puritanism of William of Orange, the other in the puerile Utopianism of Rousseau and the soured cynicism of Voltaire. One was nurtured in a land which offered refuge to Spinoza and his kinsfolk, the other was born in the excesses of the guillotine. This cannot wholly explain

the contrast between Holland and France under the humiliations of 1940, but may it not be some part of the explanation of that contrast? In any event, at a time when "freedom" is cried from every skyscraper top and bandied by every super-patriot, those who care deeply for the future of humanity will do well to disentangle the strands in the motley garment of modern liberty, to know well the bases of the only freedom which can steel devotion under persecution, and to stand fast in the liberty of the sons of God.

*viii*

As one reviews this record of Christian Churches under subjugation, five facets of its spirit shine forth—*fortitude, sagacity, magnanimity, catholicity, faith.*

Dauntless tenacity which disdains to compute cost or measure consequences is the initial impression. These Christians are the lineal posterity of a Church born at a gibbet, suckled in the Catacombs, refined under Inquisition, liberated and revived through torture and ignominy. The blood of the Martyrs is the seed of this Church. The blood of its martyrs may well prove the seed of tomorrow's greater Church of Christ.

Hardly less noteworthy and certainly not less effective has been the shrewdness which prevailingly has informed the strategy of the Church's leaders. All through the early years of Japanese overlordship in China, one institution of notoriously patriotic boldness succeeded in carrying on, almost untrammelled, when all others were padlocked. The secret lay in the leadership of a quiet retiring New

Testament scholar who kept searching the Gospels for direction in this and that baffling dilemma but who had absorbed into the marrow of his being his Master's injunction, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Wisdom mined from the same vein guides the leaders of the Continental Churches.

The distinctively Christian character of their witness appears less in its boldness and obduracy than in its magnanimity. Almost complete freedom from hate or desire for retaliation—the same spirit stamps Christian leadership under contrasted testings and temptations, in Norway and Holland, and also in Great Britain and China. Here as in other respects, the Primate of Norway is something of a symbol of a temper well-nigh universal: "We never heard from him one word of hate, scorn or reproof of the Germans. He never taught us to resist or rebel; but he gave us courage and spirit."

One feature, new for modern Christendom, marks these Christians. They are fortified, guided and spurred not only by traditions of martyred ancestries and the distinctive heritages of their own Churches, but by vivid awareness of comradeship within a living present Community which overleaps all barricades and even the chasms of enmity. French Protestants, groping in despondency and uncertainty, are inspired by communications from Christian groups throughout the world to frame their own manifesto of Christian principles which shall command them. In lodging a protest to their Government because of its connivance in maltreatment of the Jews, they buttress humanitarian arguments by

direct appeal to the conscience of the World Church which is outraged by the inhumanity of Vichy's policy. German Catholic bishops furnish the bishops of Holland with the text of their indictment of the Nazi regime. The Dutch Ecumenical Association in its declaration of dissolution through loyalty to principle speaks for fellow-Christians throughout Occupation:

"The great significance of the ecumenical movement is that it has brought the Churches into a real contact with each other. Thus there has grown up a consciousness of the solidarity of the Churches. That solidarity is not basically affected by frontiers or by international conflicts. Also in times of war, enmity and hate, the Churches can work, even without external contacts, at the one task: to permeate the world with the Gospel of Christ."

Lastly let there be no uncertainty of the mainspring of all this. If we have cited mainly instances of resistance, it is partly because of their general interest, partly because they are the most evident signs of what is transpiring. They are fruits, not roots. Onlookers puzzle over these manifestations of religion and seek explanation in some fortuitous or external factors which do not explain. These manifestations are not thrust off from the periphery of religion; they spring from its very heart. Resistance, revival, resolution—they are strands woven in a single garment. But a search for their dynamic relations would need to order them in an altered sequence. Behind the record of daring, of defiance, of fidelity lies a profound, joyous, empowering rebirth of Christian faith.

*ix*

For an appraisal of the significance of this record we may well have recourse to judgments which speak from outside any special relation to the Church. I cite two, both from observers of unquestioned objectivity and recognized wisdom.

Recently in conversation Dr. Albert Einstein spoke of the fact that all his life, though a profoundly religious man, he had had little use for the institutions of religion. Then came National Socialism. A rough rendering of his observations follows:

"Being a lover of freedom, when the revolution came to Germany, I looked to the universities to defend it knowing that they had always boasted of their devotion to the cause of truth; but no, the universities were immediately silenced. Then I looked to the great editors of the newspapers whose flaming editorials in days gone by had proclaimed their love of freedom, but they, like the universities, were silenced in a few short weeks. Then I looked to the individual writers who as literary guides of Germany had written much and often concerning the place of freedom in modern life; but they too were mute. Only the Churches stood squarely across the path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing truth. I never had any special interest in the Church before but now I feel a great affection and admiration because the Church alone has had the courage and persistence to stand for intellectual truth and moral freedom. I am forced thus to confess that what I once despised I now praise unreservedly."

To Dr. Einstein's opinion of the Churches in pre-War Germany may be added an estimate of their rôle in more

recent months by Mrs. Anne O'Hare McCormick in *The New York Times*:

"When the history of this new Reign of Terror is written, it will appear that the strongest centers of opposition to the claims of the God-State were not universities, trade unions, political parties, courts or organized business. In Germany and in the occupied countries the institution that stands up most stoutly against the pretensions of the Nazi New Order is the church. . . .

"At a moment of history when the power of religion was supposed to be at its weakest, religious leaders, Protestant and Catholic . . . suddenly rise up as the strongest force opposing the Nazi system. . . .

"The churches of all denominations attract larger congregations than in the past. . . . All we know for certain is that religion plays a vital part in this war."

Here in the United States we may well feel disquiet over the divided counsels and uncertain voices in our churches. But when we turn our eyes across the Atlantic towards fellow-Christians in Continental countries, we can feel only admiration and gratitude. One is tempted to make his own Luther's paraphrase of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the Holy Christian Church which is the Communion of Saints."

## 2.

### *The Youngest*

### *Christian Churches*

FUTURE HISTORIANS, LOOKING BACK upon the troubled times in which our lot is cast and seeking to discover the most significant single feature of the Christian Movement in the first half of the Twentieth Century, are almost certain to fasten upon one fact. All through the first decades of this century, Christian leaders in every land where the Church has penetrated and of every major Communion (except the Church of Rome) have been coming increasingly to think of their Churches as members of a World Community. And they have found themselves moved, indeed impelled, to give that awareness of World Community more adequate and tangible form.

Historians who penetrate beneath the mere chronicling of events to their setting and meaning will underscore a second fact regarding Christianity in the first half of the Twentieth Century. This trend towards World Community began in the days when the whole earth was becoming aware of itself as a planetary society. It has accelerated and achieved its most striking results precisely in the years when the secular world was breaking asunder

and humanity was hurtling into the most sanguine Armageddon in history. In the oft-quoted words of Christians who assembled at Madras over Christmas-tide 1938: "The decade since last we met has witnessed the progressive rending of the fabric of humanity; it has witnessed an increasing unification of the body of Christ." What has been taking place within the Christian Churches cannot be described as a "drift." Rather, it discloses deep and powerful currents, pressing directly against the sweeping torrents of the time.

This development towards World Christianity has been going forward along two major lines. On the one hand, it has been a *movement of expansion* seeking to extend the reach of Christian allegiance to the farthest regions of the earth, so that Christianity might truthfully be described as a *world* reality. On the other hand, it has been a *movement of consolidation*, aiming to coordinate and unify the many and varied instruments of Christian influence into a single organism, so that Christianity might truthfully be recognized as a *World Community*. The movement of expansion, in its major manifestation, is the enterprise of *Christian Missions*. The movement of consolidation is the effort towards *Christian Unity*.

These two movements are not alternatives or competitors. On the contrary, they are complementary and in the larger view indispensable to each other. Through most of the past century, each has been pursuing its own course along lines more or less parallel but unrelated to the other. In the past five years, they have consciously drawn together until today they constitute two intimately

related and fully cooperative branches of a single movement. It is this inclusive development in its two phases which is coming to be known by the phrase, still stumbling for Anglo-Saxon tongues but of majestic tradition and meaning, "Ecumenical Christianity" or "The Ecumenical Movement."

In this and the following chapters, we shall examine the two branches of World Christianity in turn.

ii

On that fateful September first 1939, the Protestant Missionary Enterprise was actively at work on every continent, among almost every people (in just one hundred countries, to be precise), and in roughly 6,000 major centers. To be sure, for more than two years previous the whole of East Asia had been torn by conflict between its two greatest powers, involving two of the strongest and most advanced of the Younger Christian Churches. The rest of mankind had stumbled feverishly forward under ever-darkening threat of world-embracing tornado. But for present purposes, we may take the date which formally launched what is now clearly seen to have been fated from the outset to be a World War. For three years, that tornado has swept the earth in ever-widening orbit and with accelerating fury. What has been happening to the tiny centers and fragile tentacles of the world-wide Christian movement of expansion? What has the War done to Christian Missions?

As in almost every aspect of the conflict, the impact of the War upon Christian Missions divides sharply into

two periods—prior to December 7, 1941, and since. This is due not primarily to differences resulting from America's involvement, but to radical changes in half of the territory of Missions wrought by Japan's conquests. That in itself is a fact worth reflection.

Up to Pearl Harbor the story of the Christian World Movement during the War is, in the main, the saga of "Orphaned Missions." It records one of the finest chapters in the nineteen-centuries-long chronicle of the expansion of Christianity. More than that, it furnishes perhaps the most conspicuous illustration of the underlying unity within Protestantism which has ever been given.

Of the total missionary outreach of the Protestant Churches at the outbreak of the War, roughly one-half was sponsored from the United States, another three-eighths from the British Commonwealth, and the final eighth by missionary societies in Germany, in Norway and Denmark and Finland, in Holland and Belgium and France, in Sweden and Switzerland.

To cite a single illustration, the Churches of the Netherlands East Indies constitute one of the strongest mission areas in the world. They embrace several of the most signal achievements of the whole World Mission. One is the numerical strength of the Christian communities. Among a populace of only sixty-six millions, Protestant Christians in the Dutch Indies outnumber those in Japan, China, Korea, the Philippines and Thailand combined. Another is the long rootage of Christianity on certain islands, dating from the early seventeenth

century. In the Minahassa district of Celebes, missionary work began in 1631; ultimately the entire populace became Christian; the church membership is now 265,000; for some years the Church of Minahassa has been entirely independent and self-sustaining. Another notable feature is the extent of conversions from Islam, more numerous than in any other area of the world. Still another is the extraordinary Batak Church on the island of Sumatra—a community of 430,000 Christians with great promise for the future yet no more than one or two generations removed from primitive savagery. With the exception of small centers of American Methodism on Sumatra and a few esoteric groups elsewhere, the entire Protestant Mission work in Holland's vast island archipelago stretching across the equator a distance considerably wider than the North American Continent was in charge of eleven Dutch, two German and one Swiss missionary societies.

Similarly, in great sections of the continent of Africa, nurture of the tender young Christian communities with their immeasurable meaning and promise for their peoples rested largely if not wholly with missionaries from Germany or France or Denmark or Norway sustained entirely from their homelands.

Since the advent of Hitler, support from German sources became increasingly precarious. With the War's outbreak, it virtually ceased. These gaps were filled in part by gifts and loans of money and personnel from neighboring Missions of other nationalities.

Then in April, May and June 1940, almost in a day,

all channels of communication and help between roughly one-eighth of the Christian missionary outreach and its bases of origin and support in Scandinavia, the Low Countries and France were severed. The Missions affected are scattered in forty countries on six continents—Japan, Korea, China, Manchuria; Netherlands India, New Guinea, Tahiti, New Caledonia; Australia; India, Iran, Arabia, Palestine, Syria; Greece, Rumania; Eritrea, Ethiopia, Tunis, the Congo, Northern Rhodesia, Tanganyika, the Sudan, Kenya, Swaziland, Cameroun, Gabon, the Ivory Coast, French West Africa, French Equatorial Africa, South-west Africa, South Africa, Central Africa, Togoland; Peru, Colombia, British Guiana, Dutch Guiana, Jamaica. The total number of Missions thus orphaned—each not an individual mission station but the work of a great Church or Society in an entire nation or area—was 120. Normally they are maintained by annual support from Europe of about \$5,000,000. In some instances, the parent Churches were dispersed or shattered. In others, almost every financial resource of their memberships was pre-empted by the conqueror. In every case, rigorous prohibitions blocked despatch of funds overseas.

Here was a catastrophe striking individual Christian centers here and there across the earth's surface. It involved World Christianity only by its threat to widely separated and largely unrelated members. Obviously only the health of the whole organism could save the isolated cells from atrophy and death. But was there sufficient cohesion and reality within the World Church? Or was

the analogy of organism largely a figment of hope rather than an actuality? A shrewd sense of strategy, such as more generally characterizes the Church of Rome than Protestantism, would have dictated the redeployment of resources from sections of the World Church not yet or less grievously afflicted. But it was less a calculating sense of strategy than a profound awareness of community within the one Church of Christ which prompted immediate and vigorous action.

Within a few weeks, a simple yet comprehensive plan was set up by the International Missionary Council under the suggestive and appealing caption "Orphaned Missions" whereby funds could be channelled from Churches and Societies in lands still free to a central treasury, and thence to the hundred and twenty Missions in forty countries on six continents facing peril of extinction. Without high pressure measures, contributions began to trickle in, then to flow in steadier and more sizable streams. The most striking record is that of the Lutheran Churches in America. By gifts totalling about \$550,000 up to the close of 1942, they have assumed responsibility for virtually all of the missionary undertakings of the Lutheran Churches of Germany, Denmark, Norway and Finland—forty-eight Missions in all, in Africa, Madagascar, Greece, Palestine, Arabia, Syria, India, China, Japan, Manchuria, Australia and New Guinea.

There are less striking features of this venture in mutual aid, however, which are no less noteworthy. As was altogether appropriate, the country best able to aid, with largest resources and giving powers least im-

paired, has supplied the great bulk of funds. Of a total to November 30, 1942, of \$2,202,000, all but \$266,000 originated in the United States. But that \$266,000 embraces some of the most heartening and humbling incidents of generosity in the chronicle of Christian Missions. The Christians of Great Britain contributed some \$75,000; those of Canada almost as much more. A single British broadcast appeal in behalf of stranded Scandinavian Missions in July 1940 (the month of Great Britain's greatest darkness and peril) brought an immediate response of some \$15,000.

Moreover, while the larger of the Older Churches have shouldered major responsibility, they have not stood alone. The records show contributions from twenty-three nations. Of these, no less than thirteen are countries of the Younger Churches. India, South Africa, Madagascar, the Congo, Cameroun, Syria, the Straits Settlements, China, Japan, Burma, Kenya, the Argentine and Brazil have done their bit.

India has raised \$25,000.

Through the National Christian Council of China are reported gifts for Orphaned Missions from that land of superlative need of CN \$75,000. Nor has China's concern been confined to sister areas among the Younger Churches. Early in 1942 a check for CN \$960.65 reached London from Dr. Francis Wei, president of Hua Chung (Central China) College, now exiled in far west Yunnan Province. This explanation accompanied it:

"During this Christmastide our thoughts often turn to the suffering in London and other parts of Great

Britain, particularly among our fellow-Christians in the churches. You have been going through in your country the sufferings of war as we have been undergoing them for the last four years and a half, except perhaps on a larger scale. You have our sympathy and our remembrances in our prayers.

"At Christmas in our refugee college this year we decided to make our Christmas offerings a gift to the churches in Great Britain which have suffered from the war. Our collection amounted to Chinese \$960.65. . . . This is a mere token of our Christian sympathy and fellowship, and I hope you will accept it for the churches of England from the Christian community of Hua Chung College. . . . We wish that the gift might have been larger, but our community is small, and particularly at a time like this we are not able to give much. The unusual exchange rate between the Chinese currency and the pound sterling makes our gift look even smaller, but we are sending it to you with our prayers and with the season's greetings."

In the meantime, though barred from continuing financial support, not only the concern but the missionary giving of the parent Churches in Germany and Occupied Lands have continued unabated. In 1940, contributions for Missions in the Continental countries in every instance equalled normal pre-War totals. In 1941, in each of the subjugated nations—in Norway, Denmark, Holland and Occupied France—missionary giving exceeded the total for the previous year. These funds are being laid away for ready use when hostilities cease.

This comprehensive and intricate mechanism of mutual aid crosses all traditional barriers, those of theo-

logical outlook and those of confessional allegiance. But also the far wider chasms of present political enmity. Christians of China, of India, of Holland, of England rise to bring succor to Germans and to assure continuance of their work. Christians of Norway and of New Zealand and of the United States unite to save the labors and persons of Frenchmen, bound in at least formal allegiance to the Vichy regime. Now to Christians of Japan must be entrusted protection and shepherding of millions of youthful Christians in lands under Japanese conquest who have thought of Japanese only as enemies and despoilers of their lands.

Thus, the universal fellowship of a World Community which no longer recognizes "giving" and "receiving" countries but only a common loyalty and a common responsibility is winning concrete illustration in that most immediate and practical mutuality among Christians whose practice stems from the earliest days—fellowship in affliction and in need through the sharing by those who can with those who lack.

The story of Orphaned Missions is summed up in these facts:

In the first three years of war \$2,202,000 has been contributed by Christians in twenty countries, and distributed to sustain life and work in one hundred and twenty Missions in forty countries.

Not one appeal for aid has gone without a response of assistance.

So far as is known, not one missionary has been withdrawn from active service because of lack of support.

There has been "no overlapping and no overlooking."

iii

Now let us try to gain a clearer impression of what this means not in terms of figures but through two or three typical illustrations.

In recent months, *Madagascar* has suddenly loomed in scare headlines. It has forced itself upon the consciousness of a world which previously would have been embarrassed to define the nationality or mark the location of that vast island, the world's third largest, lying off the southeast coast of Africa. To Christians, the history of their faith in Madagascar is an equally unknown story. Yet it is one of the most thrilling in the records of Christianity.<sup>1</sup>

Christianity was first introduced into Madagascar in the second decade of the Nineteenth Century by missionaries of the London Missionary Society. The native King lent his encouragement. The Christian movement spread rapidly.

Then, like a bolt from the blue, the scene changed. A new Queen ascended the throne and set herself to exterminate Christianity from her territories. On March 1, 1835, Christianity was publicly denounced. Christian worship was prohibited on pain of death. The possession of Christian books was made a capital offense. The missionaries were given a time limit within which to quit the country.

<sup>1</sup> The paragraphs which follow draw heavily upon three brief releases by the Rev. A. M. Chirgwin, General Secretary of the London Missionary Society.

Faced with forced withdrawal, the little band of missionaries lodged their hopes for the continuation of their work in one factor—their ability to leave behind them copies of the Bible in the native language. Immediately, an exciting race against time began. The Mission had set up a hand press and certain parts of the Bible had already been translated and printed. Was it possible to translate and print the whole? The time available to them was a matter of weeks. Their little mission group numbered only a handful. The Queen herself granted a brief extension of the period from this interesting though hardly laudable motive. She had once been presented with a bar of soap and she wanted more. One of the missionaries had some knowledge of chemistry and she permitted them to remain long enough to manufacture a supply of soap for her use.

As the time allowance fled past, the missionaries, men and women alike, worked with feverish haste. Some concentrated on translation. Others set type and turned the heavy old-fashioned press. Still others fastened the sheets together or attached the bindings. Within three months, the first bound copy of the completed translation was ready. "Now the Queen can do her worst," cried David Jones, leader of the group. In the remaining month of their stay, seventy copies of the whole Bible and several hundred copies of the New Testament, the Psalms or shorter portions were struck off. As the missionaries sailed away, they entrusted to their native Christian converts and colleagues these fragile and impersonal instruments to conserve and extend the living faith.

Then began the second act of the drama. Could these printed treasures be preserved from determined uprooting by the Queen's spies? If preserved, would they really effectually maintain against persecution, torture and death a faith implanted only two decades in the lives of simple native folk?

Since the possession of Christian books was punishable by death, the Bible had to be smuggled from the printing press to places of safety. A favorite hiding place was the rice pit usually found beneath the floor of a native home. As the persecution increased in intensity, many Christians took their Bibles to pieces and distributed the sections. Some pages were sewn into the linings of clothing, others were hidden between slabs of stone at agreed spots, still others were wrapped and stowed away in caves or hollow trees.

"Sometimes the message would be whispered round a village, 'Tonight we shall meet at St. John's Gospel,' or 'Let us meet at Psalm 103 after the evening meal,' or 'You will find us at Romans 8 this evening.' Then one by one the Christians would creep out stealthily to the place where this particular part of the Bible was known to be hidden.

"'Have you got it, Rehara?' would be the whispered inquiry. 'It is time for the reading.'

"'Yes, it is here beneath the stones.' Rolling back a big boulder Rehara would take out the precious parcel, handling it with great care. Then, taking off the leaves in which it was wrapped he would bring out a few stained and mildewed pages. Holding them close to the flickering lamp, he would begin to read:

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

"The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? . . ."

"After a short pause the leader would whisper again, 'It is now your turn, Ravelo. Have you got yours with you?'

"Yes,' a young man would reply, 'in my cloak,' and pulling open the stitches of the deep hem, he would reveal a page of the New Testament. Coming close to the light, and lifting his cloak near to it, he would read, 'Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God. . . .'"

Not infrequently, while these clandestine gatherings were in session, soldiers or spies would pounce upon them. At dawn the next day, the Christians would be speared to death, or thrown from the Hurling Rocks and dashed to pieces at the foot of the cliff. Others hid in the mountains and forests and dens and caves of the earth.

How many Christians met their death in the long-drawn-out persecution will never be known. What is known is that when the Queen died twenty-five years later and the missionaries were able to return, they found that the number of Christians had multiplied fivefold. Within a few years Christianity was officially recognized. The new Queen, her husband and her Prime Minister were baptized, and the great bulk of the populace placed themselves under Christian instruction. Here is a chronicle from the last century, re-enacting with extraordinary parallelism the sequence of Diocletian and Constantine and Theodosius, and the vicissitudes of a

Christian community under successive indifference, toleration, persecution, recognition and acceptance.

From such roots, the Church of Christ in Madagascar has grown. When Norway and France fell in the spring of 1940, the direction of a Christian populace of 450,000 (out of 3,800,000) Malagasies was largely under the charge of one Norwegian and one French Protestant Mission. Without warning they now found themselves isolated and without resources.

The Lutheran Churches of America, supplemented by grants from the Norwegian Government in Exile, have sustained the Scandinavian Mission. The despatch of funds from the general Orphaned Missions treasury in New York helped to relieve the French Protestants threatened with destitution until their own societies could resume remittances. Missionaries of the British Friends Service Council in Madagascar contributed Frs. 10,000 from their own meager personal resources towards the assistance of their hard-pressed French colleagues on the island. By these means, with sharp salary reductions, the "orphaned" missionaries have been enabled "to hold on." Perhaps most notable of all, all expenses for the maintenance of the work on the field are now, for the first time, being assumed by the native church itself.

With the most recent changes in Madagascar's political status, the period immediately ahead again looms uncertain. But for the future of work, cradled in such adversity and sustained by the united concern of Christian groups on both sides of the world cataclysm, one need harbor little fear.

## iv

Another distant island, lifted in general public consciousness from misty obscurity into vivid importance by recent events, is *Sumatra*. Intimately wrapped up with the fate of Sumatra is the destiny of one of the most remarkable Christian advances of an even more recent past.

Among the remote mountains in the northern part of the island dwells a Malayan people of exceptional vigor and spirit, the Bataks. They number about 1,000,000. They are virtually surrounded by fervid Moslem neighbors, for Sumatra is predominantly Moslem.

It was in 1861 that an outstanding missionary of the German Rhenish Mission began work among them. This was prior to any effective establishment of Dutch governmental control. In less than eighty years, an indigenous Church of over 400,000 Bataks had been built up. It is much the largest Church in the Netherlands East Indies. Indeed its membership numbers twice the total of Christians in Japan, almost twice those in the Philippines, and two-thirds of the membership of the great Church in China.<sup>2</sup>

Although less than three generations removed from primitive barbarism, the leaders of the Batak Church have long demonstrated great independence of spirit and considerable restiveness under the paternalism of their German missionary sponsors. In 1925, under strong

<sup>2</sup> An excellent brief description of the Batak Church by Dr. J. Merle Davis may be found in Volume 5 of the Madras Series, *The Economic Basis of the Church*, ch. XXII.

pressure from the nationals, the form of independence was granted. How nominal was its character is frankly stated by a Dutch missionary observer: "The Germans in their missionary work have always considered that the independence of the indigenous Church was a fine ideal but in reality an impracticability. The patriarchal relationship prevailed. The independence was very partial." At the head of the entire Church was a German missionary "Ephorus" in almost complete control. In each district, a missionary exercised corresponding functions.

By the beginning of 1940, financial stringency caused by difficulties in sending support out of Germany under the Nazi regime had reduced the missionary staff to 22 ordained missionaries, four doctors, 20 women missionaries and nurses. Their functions were defined as "supervision of the parish work (including most of the finances), supervision of the schools, training of the teachers and ministers, control of the hospitals (two general hospitals, fourteen branch hospitals, fourteen outpatient departments), management of the leper colony, a school for handicrafts, the mission workshops and printing press, and literary work." Something over 50 Batak ordained ministers and nearly 1,000 native schoolteachers worked under their direction.

On May 10, 1940, the entire German missionary staff was interned. Only one Dutch missionary remained. What would happen to this very young and immature Christian community thus torn loose from its traditional moorings? Grave alarm overshadowed both German and

Dutch mission circles. Neighboring Dutch centers rushed to fill the breach. The Netherlands missions-consul flew from Java to lend advice and stability.

The Batak Christians, however, took a different view of the new situation. At long last the coveted freedom was suddenly thrust upon them. They were of one determination to solidify it into a permanent possession. "A hundred per cent independence" became their rallying cry.

A great Synod was called for July 10, 1940. Over 150 native Christians, mainly lay leaders, assembled for two days. In fiery debate the structure of a new Church was worked out and adopted. A Batak pastor was elected chairman of the Church. The Dutch missionaries were invited to continue their services with the title of "Church-Visitors." Their functions were explicitly defined: "He has admission to all our meetings, our homes, and our churches. He is always welcome." Actual control and direction were reserved to the Batak Christians themselves. A friendly Dutch missionary who attended the Synod as observer thus summarizes his impressions of this sudden and radical transition:

"By these decisions great changes have been completed. The European missionaries have wholly lost their central position. Real power for them has not been preserved. . . . This means a complete turnover of the whole Church organization. The times required this. The number of the European staff was much too small to continue to work as formerly, and we believe an indigenous Church may demand self-government. However, the transfer was too rapid, and this will produce many difficulties in the future. . . ."

A year and a half later, Japanese conquest of the Dutch East Indies presumably interned also all Dutch missionary advisers. The Batak Church is confronted by another novel and far more precarious chapter. Is it possible that this brief period of unexpected independence has offered that redoubtable Christian community a Providential preparation for its new trials?

v

Another illustration takes us to the heart of the Belgian Congo in West Africa. Here, as in many areas, the sustaining Missions represented not only the nation in control but five others also. Seven Continental Missions were at work—the Belgian Society of Protestant Missions in the Congo, a Danish Baptist Mission, two Norwegian and three Swedish Missions. After July 1940, all except those from Sweden were left completely destitute.

Help has been forthcoming from the Norwegian Government in Exile, from the American Northern Baptist Convention, from British Churches, from the Anglican Church in New Zealand,\* from two Societies in Sweden and from the general Orphaned Missions Fund. But these generous gifts from so many widely scattered friends were supplemented by donations raised in the Congo itself among the missionary forces there to the sum of Frs. 175,000 and reported through the Congo Protestant Council.

The result? Let the recipients themselves speak through their *Congo Mission News*:

“Perhaps few of our readers realize what it means to be cut off completely from their home base and to be

without means of support and unable to carry on the work to which they have dedicated their lives. . . . Had it not been for the Missionary Relief War Fund the Missions in the Belgian Congo which are cut off in this way would not have been able to continue their work. Today the missionaries of these societies are giving thanks to God for the way in which he has worked in the hearts of so many of their friends and colleagues in Africa, America, and England so that the funds necessary for their support have been forthcoming. . . .

"This wartime has enriched us as individuals and as a Mission with a tremendous experience of how wonderful in care our Heavenly Father is and also how real and efficient the Brotherhood in Christ is and how thrillingly it expresses itself in time of need. It is simply amazing, but nevertheless a fact, that by the instrument of many of His people, for the most of us entirely unknown friends, the Lord has provided us with the same amount for the mission work as in previous years. The general rise of prices, however, has of course reduced the real value of that amount to about two-thirds. But we have been able to carry on normally as far as finances are concerned.

"The cutting off from our home base gave us the push which made us take the last step to entire self-support in our church work. It was taken very courageously by the Africans and it worked very smoothly for quite a number of months. Then came a sort of spiritual downfall which brought a severe test on the self-support system. But this was withstood.

"In closing we wish to express our very deep gratefulness and admiration to and for all those who so willingly have assumed the responsibility of 'keeping us going' by providing all our material needs. God bless you abundantly. Pray with us that we may not be unworthy of your generous aid. We realize that many have

been giving beyond their power and of their own choice. Do give a message of thanks, please, to those African followers of Christ who have certainly not given of their abundance. It is holy money we receive and we pray earnestly that we may use it only to His Glory who has made His people give it. We want to be very faithful in bringing the glorious Gospel to all those surrounding us who are in such great need. . . ."

*vi*

From another section of Africa comes one further brief picture which may serve as a symbol of what is taking place within the World Mission in wartime. This incident occurs in a British territory where a large native Church has been built up under the direction of German missionaries. The latter are to be placed in internment. A British missionary arrives to take over. On the day preceding the departure of the Germans, the ordination of the first African pastor from the Mery tribe is scheduled. The British missionary is invited to preach the sermon and share in the ordination.

We must imagine a simple native church somewhere in the wilds of Africa. Christians representing more than ten tribes make up the congregation. The African who has advanced with greatest promise in the Christian life comes forward to become the first of his people to be commissioned as a minister of Jesus Christ. As he kneels, a German and a British missionary stand side by side, place their hands together upon his head and appoint him in behalf of the Universal Church to "go and teach all nations." As the service concludes, his spiritual sponsor turns to face imprisonment and commits into the

hands of his "enemy" the shepherding and nurture of this new pastor and his flock.

So one might continue with instance after instance of the fashion in which the unforeseen exigencies of wartime necessity are being met by united Christian resources. And of the results, often no less unexpected, upon the life and health of both Missions and Younger Churches.

*vii*

In the meantime, far-reaching unifications in missionary administration have been instituted both in the countries of missionary origin and in the fields where Missions are at work. In the Netherlands East Indies immediately on the severance of contact with Holland in May 1940, all of the Missions united to form a joint committee with direction of all available resources. Some years previous, eight parent societies in Holland had merged their administrative work under a single headquarters staff located in Leiden.

More recently, the National Christian Council of China has submitted a pooled budget of \$20,000 for special wartime projects. All of the American missionary societies with work in China have united to meet this request. These special funds will go for a variety of purposes including student evangelism, Christian rural education, conferences, literature, etc.

*viii*

So much for the record prior to Pearl Harbor. Of the radical changes which have occurred in Asia in the

months since, and of the longer-range adjustments which will be worked out by the conquering power after the first hectic situation has somewhat stabilized, it is too early to speak. Almost certainly, many large and important centers of work will be required to close altogether—in the Philippines, Malaya, the Netherlands Indies, Thailand and Burma, as has already taken place in China. Quite probably a very few projects will be entrusted to the new Church of Christ in Japan, so eager to receive and carry forward the commission for Christian Missions throughout East Asia, so meagerly equipped suddenly to become custodian for the far-flung enterprises of the missionary forces of a dozen Western countries in some thousands of centers. Everywhere, enormous burdens and responsibilities will fall directly and abruptly upon the native Christians themselves, some of them vigorous though immature Younger Churches, some hardly yet ready to assume the status of independent Churches at all. Moreover, they must face their new tasks, not as was the case with the Batak Church in 1939 under the favorable patronage of a Christian and sympathetic government with experienced missionaries and mature Christians of neighboring areas close at hand with advice and aid. Rather they must come of age under the hated rule of a mighty non-Christian Empire bent upon the subjugation of their peoples, and with no recourse for sympathy and support save to the scanty forces of a fledgling Church of the conquering nation, closely linked with the government which they regard as their oppressor. As the missionaries leave their young colleagues to this prospect while they themselves are

herded in confinement or internment, they will hardly be able to stifle grave concern for the continuance and health and fidelity of the work to which their lives have been given. Yet they may well take courage from the record of other younger Christian groups left in similar plight and forced to stand or fall in their own strength. On the whole they have shamed the expectations of those who knew and loved them best. Those most capable of judging their readiness for such an emergency did, in fact, grossly underestimate the latent powers of these young Christians to master their adversities.

*ix*

Thus far our attention has been given only to individual and rather limited segments of the World Mission. And in each case to centers which relied heavily upon foreign missionary leadership and therefore were especially handicapped by the severing of ties with Europe and America.

Evidence of quite different character, yet certainly no less notable, comes from those Younger Churches which had already come of age when war overwhelmed them. Indeed it is precisely within the two nations with which this World War originated, and which have endured its impact for more than five years, that there have occurred Christian developments which in many respects are the most remarkable, and which history may judge the most important for World Christianity.

First, consider China. China with her myriads of people. China, a land in which poverty, malnutrition and

suffering are endemic; floods, famine and plague periodically epidemic. China enduring the sixth year of a brutal aggression without provocation and without excuse.

The basic facts about the Christian Movement in China are now fairly well known. The population of this largest nation on earth numbers close to 450,000,000. The Christian constituency in China, both Protestant and Catholic, cannot greatly exceed 4,000,000—roughly 1 per cent. Yet, if one runs his eye down the pages of *Who's Who in China*, where are listed the principal leaders of the country, he will be startled to discover that one in every six is a Christian. No less impressive in a land noted for its reverence for learning and for the formative influence of teaching upon the minds of men, is the fact that just half of those listed in *Who's Who* have received their education in the Christian schools and colleges of China.

If one turns directly to the personnel of China's leadership, the meaning of these figures is far more striking; it can hardly elude the most casual observer. He discovers the impact of Christian influence in three concentric circles of widening radius.

At the head of China's government and at the very core of her national existence as at once the responsible rulers and the trusted inspirers of her entire people is a group of hardly more than two dozen men and women charged with the major tasks in this hour of supreme national emergency. A good half of them are Christians. Church members or nominal Christians, it may be asked,

like many who head the governments of so-called "Christian nations"? A few of them, doubtless. But most of them, earnest, reverent men and women gripped and guided by a depth of personal religious experience and consecration almost unknown among persons in comparable positions in the West. Many of them find it necessary in the midst of their grave responsibilities to take at least a brief period each day for Bible reading, meditation and prayer, seeking divine wisdom and help in their overwhelming tasks, and in the face of each major decision of national policy, putting to themselves the question: "What does the Christian ethic direct here?" It is hardly an exaggeration that among corresponding leaders in *all* of the "Christian nations" of Europe and America, there is not more than one or at most two or three persons of Christian conviction and devotion to match five or six of China's foremost officials.

No wonder it is said that China's Government has today the most Christian leadership of any in the world. What other could possibly be compared with it?

Surrounding this group at the heart of administration is a more numerous and wider circle of Christians in various important positions—the chiefs of government departments, the heads of national educational institutions, leaders among labor and in the movements for social relief and reform.

However, the significance of the Christian Movement does not stop with those who call themselves Christians. Beyond the far-flung company of Christian men and women in varied government and civil tasks is a still

wider circle of Christian influence, this time not in the persons of professing Christians at all but through those whose training for leadership has been in Christian schools and colleges.

All over China one comes upon them and in every phase of national service—in government office, in public education, in social philanthropy, in labor reform, in rural reconstruction. A half dozen whom I chanced to meet during a brief visit to China four years ago come quickly to mind—a vice-minister of foreign affairs, the president of a great government university, the dean of another, the head of one of the most vigorous war relief agencies, a leader in rural reconstruction—all trained in Christian schools where they were inspired with an ideal for their people and a conception of public service for themselves and who are now giving of their full powers to bring that ideal to realization within the life of the nation.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps more than any other influence, Christianity is responsible for the extraordinary character of China's resistance. For its unyielding resolution. But even more, for the spirit of that resistance—a resistance which declines to yield to the temptation to hatred or passion for revenge, which refuses to retaliate the wanton destruction of civilian life and property, which seeks only an international order of justice and peace in which both Japan and China may take appropriate parts.

<sup>3</sup> For a fuller exposition of the facts here briefly summarized, see the writer's *For the Healing of the Nations*, pp. 91-102.

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Furthermore, it is hardly too much to say that the greatest single hope for China's future lies in that tiny band of devoted Christians at the core of her government, then in the wider circle of Christians scattered through every phase of national leadership, and finally in the influences which have flowed and continue to flow out into the fabric of national life from Christian schools and colleges, Christian hospitals and churches.

x

One major development within the Christian World Mission, while it occurred prior to Pearl Harbor, belongs to the chain of events of which Japanese belligerency was the inevitable outcome. This is the unification of the Christian forces of Japan, their liberation from all dependence upon foreign support, and the creation of the Church of Christ in Japan. Here, as with other radical readjustments forced by the War, initial judgments certainly outside Japan itself were divided, many of them gravely apprehensive. Here, also, as anticipation has given way to actuality, counsels of fear have on the whole been discredited. Forebodings have had to make place for admiration and thanksgiving. It cannot be contended that a change in the whole framework and life of the Christian Churches of Japan, so drastic, so comparatively sudden, could be immune from some unhappy results. But so far as our knowledge runs, these have been far fewer and less grave than had been widely predicted. The Japanese Christians have risen with almost miraculous zeal and devotion to their new and overwhelming re-

sponsibilities. In the realm of self-support, churches are accomplishing what two years ago they themselves would not have dreamed of even as an ideal. As far as is known, not a Christian institution in Japan has been forced to close nor has an essential center of work been abandoned through the sudden withdrawal of overseas aid.

Not only are the Christians of Japan maintaining the life and work of their churches with comprehensiveness unimpaired and zeal greatly quickened. According to reports radioed from Japan in late November 1942, they have actually succeeded in strengthening both the unity and the ecumenical character of their new Church of Christ in Japan during the first year of its existence. At the second annual General Conference on November 24th, four advance steps were announced. The major part of the Episcopal Church of Japan, which heretofore had been the only large Communion to remain aloof from the united Church, indicated its intention of joining the union.<sup>4</sup> Second, the eleven blocs, which carried over into the new structure the main denominational types as sections within the united Church, have been dissolved; it had hardly been anticipated that this final step of complete unification could be achieved so quickly. Third, the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Temperance Unions are to "continue as Christian organizations" and become members of the Church of

<sup>4</sup> At the founding of the united Church, all Protestant groups except Episcopalians and Seventh Day Adventists were included. It is thought probable that the Adventists have either been dissolved or have so changed as to lose their former identity. Thus, with the adherence of the Episcopalians, the Church of Christ in Japan will embrace all Protestant bodies in that land.

Christ in Japan. This indicates that these bodies have succeeded in resisting insistent pressure to sacrifice their distinctive Christian character by merging in general youth and women's federations. On the contrary they are strengthening their Christian basis and relationships by inclusion within the new Church. Most important of all, in the cryptic announcement of the official Tokyo broadcast, "The Church renounces the concept of Nipponese Christianity and asserts . . . 'Christianity of Japan.'" For an understanding of the full significance of this action, one requires interpretation by those familiar with the Japanese Church situation. Dr. Charles W. Iglehart thus summarizes the meaning of this momentous decision:

"The idea of Japanese Christianity . . . became very vocal in the summer of 1940. It was the slogan of an aggressive organization of nationalist minded Christians. The sudden prominence of this idea ran parallel to the emphasis put upon German Christianity in Germany.

"Reading between the lines of this statement, we see the extreme right wing within the Christian Church itself pressing for a harmony of Christianity with the national myths and an identification with the Japanese spirit in all its expressions.

"Against all this the Church sets itself with courage and clarity by reaffirming that it is not Japanese Christianity but Christianity in Japan. The statement thus repudiates a narrowly national, syncretistic Christianity and affirms itself as standing not only in the present world Christian family but in the tradition of classic Christianity. Unless we misread the article, the Church in Japan at the close of its first year of life as a united body, makes its first public act a statement which begins

by facing in head-on collision the forces that would rob it of its truly Christian and ecumenical nature, and at considerable risk gives public testimony to its truly Christian character."

Dr. Iglehart adds his judgment as to the significance of the fourfold announcement in its entirety :

"So far as this radio message submits to interpretation with the meager data we have at hand, it yields a reassuring impression of a small Christian minority movement under terrific pressures without and within, but still maintaining its constituted right to live and speak and exercising this with courage and conviction. Thus far the united Church of Christ in Japan gives us encouragement to believe that it is maintaining a sound life."

There can be no question that the merging of many Missions and Churches of eleven main types into a single Church of Christ in Japan fulfills a deep desire, yes, a profound sense of obligation, among Japanese Christians, especially laymen. Those who listened attentively to the accents of the Younger Churchmen at Madras whenever they spoke of Christian Unity were compelled to recognize a passionate yearning, but also a conviction of direct and binding commission from Christ, almost without parallel among the Older Churches. These Christians of the East really meant what they said when they declared that Christian Unity is not merely a desirable goal, a worthy ideal, but also an immediate duty laid upon the Christians of our generation by the Lord of the Church. The Japanese Christians did not speak on this theme with greater fervor than others. But they were in certain

respects best fitted to initiate the venture. In any event, the opportunity, indeed necessity, has come to them first. It came opportunely while there was still time to plan carefully, to perfect the specifications for their new structure and to arrange many of the transitions before missionary help would in any event have been forcibly and completely withdrawn. Moreover, there was still time to divest their Christian Church of any bane of foreign control or support before everything associated with Great Britain or the United States fell wholly under the curse.

What a glorious paradox that in the very hour when the Christians of Japan must suffer alienation and isolation from virtually the whole of Christ's Universal Church, there are given to them two great pioneering and prophetic tasks in behalf of that Universal Church. The first of the Younger Christian Churches to come to full independence and self-support. And the first Christian Church in any land to form one visible organic Body of Christ for almost the whole Protestant population of an entire nation!

*xi*

From the record of Christian Missions in this War—a record thus far necessarily incomplete—two impressions stand forth with special vividness.

One is the profound, hitherto undiscerned unity of Christ's Churches, Protestant, in a single awareness of common responsibility for his Mission entrusted to them. No one who sat through one or more of the great ecu-

menical gatherings of this decade—Oxford, Edinburgh, Madras, Amsterdam—could escape the realization that the actuality of Christian Unity among the Protestant and Orthodox bodies was far greater than had been claimed, far greater than these bodies themselves had realized, infinitely greater than an outside world, viewing structural and blatant divisions, had even suspected. That underlying but essential unity has now been given expression in ways more significant than the coming together in conference of official and self-conscious spokesmen of the divided parts. It has appeared in an area where its genuineness and depth cannot be questioned, far more convincing than protestations and declarations. It has demonstrated itself in the glad surrender and willing assumption of responsibility for long-nurtured and treasured work, in common sacrifice and suffering, in a sharing of toil and work and tears transcending all barriers of political enmity or traditional theological and confessional divergences. Orphaned Missions is not only one of the great philanthropic achievements of Christian history. It is a tangible, indisputable proof of the measure of present unity within the Body of Christ.

A second major impression is the unexpected strength of the Younger Christian Churches, and even of those still more immature groups of Christians who had not yet taken formal place among the Churches of Christ; their readiness for, and capacity to discharge, responsibilities for which they have had meager training and for which it was assumed that they were as yet incompetent.

This fact is illustrated in similar terms from every

corner of the world. In field after field, the withdrawal of the major part of foreign support has forced the native Churches to assume unexampled burdens for the maintenance of their own work. We have observed this as one feature of what is taking place in each area mentioned—among the Bataks in Sumatra, in Madagascar, in the Belgian Congo, in China and Japan. A visit by a missionary to an area in Tanganyika previously under charge of the Leipzig Lutheran Mission "has revealed the remarkable extent to which in the absence of German missionaries, indigenous responsibility is being assumed, when account is taken of the distinction in leadership between European and native pastors hitherto maintained as a traditional policy of the mission. There is an impression of real consolidation of Christian foundations which will have important effects in the future."

No one dare forecast what the final results of the War's impact may count up to. That there will be grave losses and even more numerous breaches to be repaired is undeniable. Probably, much depends on the length of the "duration." Christians are always loath to admit that the destinies of Christ's Church can hang on political developments, especially military outcomes. Yet history only too clearly forces them to that admission. It is obvious that in vast areas permanent crippling of the fruits of more than a century's outpouring of life and wealth and prayer and labor would follow upon a final Axis victory. Even assuming escape from that catastrophe, it is obvious that the gravity and permanence of

injury, now unavoidably taking place through internment of missionaries and imposition of Japanese rule, depend upon the duration of Japanese overlordship of the great mission areas of Southern and Southeastern Asia.

Even in the darkest perspective, granted the eventual release of these Younger Churches from Japanese domination and the restoration of some missionary aid, it is already clear that the tragedies, the sufferings, the anxieties of these War days are bringing immense and permanent gains to World Christianity. They are teaching the World Church its underlying unity. And they are pressing to maturity and to the assumption of maturity's responsibilities large numbers of Christ's newest and least mature Churches.

*xii*

It is not impossible that these facts may have meaning of the greatest consequence not alone for the future of the Churches concerned and of Christian Missions in the Twentieth Century, but also for the life and strength of the entire Church of Christ in the next great epoch of its nineteen-centuries-long pilgrimage through history. To this possibility, we shall return at the end of our survey, in our Conclusion.

### 3.

## *The World Church*

ON THE EVE OF THE WORLD CHRISTIAN conferences at Oxford and Edinburgh in the summer of 1937, Professor Ernest Barker of Cambridge wrote in the London *Times*, "Our century has its sad features. But there is one feature in its history which is not sad. That is the gathering tide of Christian Union."

#### *i*

The modern movement towards Christian Unity dates from before the present century. For fifty years and more preceding and by a dozen paths, Christians of different lands and traditions had been reaching out for closer contacts and towards deeper fellowships which might take definite organized expressions.

These explorations and approaches were of three main types.

One brought together Churches of the same denominational families scattered throughout the world. As early as 1851, a great Pan-Anglican celebration prepared the way for the first Lambeth Conference sixteen years later. Since then, except for interruptions due to war, the bishops of the Church of England and of sister churches of the Episcopalian family have come together at least once

in ten years. By the turn of the century, each of the larger Communions—Anglicans, Baptists, Congregationalists, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Reformed—had created some form of world fellowship with periodic meetings.

A second type united organizations concerned with special groups, such as youth or students, which had branches in many countries. The Young Men's Christian Associations of all lands have been knit in a World Alliance for three-quarters of a century, the Young Women's Christian Associations for half a century. In 1895, through the pioneering initiative of John R. Mott, there came into being that one of all the early world Christian fellowships which history may recognize as the most influential towards the realization of a world-wide Christendom—the World's Student Christian Federation. It now binds together Christian student groups in some thirty countries in a fellowship more profound and more prophetic than any other within World Christendom. Each of these bodies and all its constituent members are interdenominational.

The third type of world Christian organization drew together individuals or groups associated about a common interest or goal—religious education, missions, temperance, world peace. The World Sunday School Convention met in London in 1889. In 1914, on the very eve of the first World War, the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches came into being.

Much the most significant body of this latter type—

in certain respects the most direct precursor of the Ecumenical Movement of today—sprang directly from the “movement of expansion.” It was the outgrowth of Christian Missions. It took its rise in the first great ecumenical assemblage of Christians in modern times, the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. The Edinburgh Conference was called by the missionary societies of the Protestant Churches to consider their common responsibilities for the world tasks of their faith. This gathering of over a thousand delegates from every area of the world paved the way for the chain of world Christian assemblies which have followed. There for the first time since the Reformation, representatives of great Church bodies of many lands and communions learned to speak and think together, to understand and trust one another, and to plan unitedly for a more effective discharge of the major responsibility of each—the extension of Christ’s Church to the ends of the earth. At Edinburgh in 1910, the ideal of a single strategy for the many branches of the Church of Christ was quickened. The baffling practical difficulties involved in bringing persons of such diverse languages, cultures and viewpoints together and achieving a measure of agreement were there given experimental testing. Procedures for common action were initiated. All subsequent ecumenical conferences have built upon the Edinburgh experience and vision. Moreover, at the Edinburgh Conference, the imagination of one young American was kindled to envision a unity still more fundamental in character and more difficult of achievement, the structural reunion of the severed fragments of Christ’s Church.

Through the passionate conviction of Bishop Charles H. Brent, the World Conference on Faith and Order later came into being. Perhaps most important of all, the Edinburgh Conference provided for the continuance of its labors through a committee which gradually evolved into the International Missionary Council—the earliest constituent structure of the now forming Ecumenical Movement. Conferences at Jerusalem in 1928 and Madras in 1938 were the successors of Edinburgh. Thus, from the outset, the Movement of Expansion and the Movement of Consolidation were intimately though unofficially linked. The Edinburgh Conference and its aftermath demonstrated that these two Movements should be, what they are now in fact becoming, correlative branches of a single ecumenical organization.

It is important to note that, significant and prophetic as these many different world Christian bodies and meetings were, not one of them attempted to unite *entire Churches across denominational lines*.

Moreover, it must be recognized that these developments among Christians reflected the prevailing drift in the general life of the times. Those were years when the ends of the earth were becoming conscious of one another. Despite tensions and minor wars, and occasional warnings of greater conflict to come, a sense of world reality and world unity was growing upon men. The most powerful forces in mankind's life were centripetal currents drawing nations and peoples into closer association and organization. In all these trends and in the hopes they bred, Christian leadership shared to the full.

Then fell the First World War. It checked but it did not kill the general impulse towards world unity. On the contrary, at its conclusion, still greater centripetal energies were released into every aspect of humanity's life. Now they were more powerful and more world-wide than in any era since the disintegration of Graeco-Roman civilization. They found supreme expression in the League of Nations. The League reflected the prevailing drift and symbolized aspiration which was well-nigh universal. In virtually all lesser fields of human interest—in trade, in education, in art, in science—the same tendencies found expression in the overpassing of ancient barriers and the building up of world-wide cooperation and organization.

As in the pre-War period, developments within the Churches closely paralleled the dominant trend in general culture. In the high hopes which fired all men's enthusiasm Christians continued to share.

However, the greatly accelerated advance in Christian Unity which marked the decade following the First World War was not merely or mainly a by-product of the general drift. The leadership of the Churches emerged from the War aghast at its destruction and folly, humiliated at the impotence of Christian influence to prevent it, penitent at the sorry spectacle of a divided and ineffective Christianity.

Two new concerns drove them to novel and more fundamental steps towards Christian Unity. On the one hand, they realized that, if mankind's high hopes were

not to suffer shipwreck, the Churches must discover ways of bringing a united Christian judgment and influence more effectively to bear upon the great social and international diseases. On the other hand, they were driven to admit that the Churches could not hope to heal mankind's conflicts, indeed had no right to proffer healing, unless they could cure their own divisions, and thus come before humanity with a unity commensurate with the urgency of the world's need.

Thus post-War efforts of Christians moved along two new lines. They resulted in two quite new world Christian movements. Each of them was more comprehensive and more directly and officially representative of the Churches than any Christian organization since the ancient separation of Eastern and Western Churches in the eleventh century.

One sought to link the Churches in united impact upon the intricate corporate problems of society which envelop and condition the lives of Christians, of their Churches and of their nations. To employ a term from psychology, its outlook has been "extrovert," out-reaching. It originated in a conference of delegates from all major communions of Protestantism and Eastern Orthodoxy at Stockholm in 1925—the first major post-War assemblage of Christians. The Conference eventuated in the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work.

The second new movement also took rise in a great gathering of officially appointed representatives from much the same Churches who met at Lausanne in 1927 in the first World Conference on Faith and Order. Here

the Churches turned their attention inward upon themselves; the perspective was "introvert." Concentrating upon the factors within and among the Churches which block their fuller organic unity, an effort was made to plot a cautious but sure course which might lead to the solution of these differences, and so to the ultimate reunion of all principal Christian bodies outside the Church of Rome. The movement which originated at Lausanne has continued under the name of the World Conference on Faith and Order.

*iii*

Then came the decade 1927-1937. What a contrast to the years immediately preceding! The climate of the world changed almost overnight. Centripetal tendencies which had been permeating every phase of human culture with mounting power for half a century until they rose to climax in the hope of a World Society were overwhelmed by catastrophic centrifugal forces culminating in a Second World War far more sanguine and baneful than its predecessor. In a half dozen fevered and tragic years the laborious gains of decades crumbled and disappeared. The very phrases "world peace," "world culture," "world unity" which had steeled men through the earlier sufferings of conflict and inspired the labors of reconstruction seemed to echo dimly from the vocabulary of some archaic Utopia.

It is precisely this period of dissolution and disillusionment which witnessed the most resolute and productive advances towards Christian Unity since the Middle Ages.

All through the decade from 1927 to 1937, the two new movements, known popularly as "Life and Work" and "Faith and Order," moved forward along parallel lines, though with ever closer consultation and collaboration. To many it seemed only logical and right that they should join and become in structure what they clearly were in fact—complementary phases of a single world Christian movement. The leaders of the two organizations wisely guided them in that direction. But the leaders in turn were responding to a growing demand from the Churches themselves for a single agency to speak and act for all non-Roman Christendom. Accordingly, when the time approached for the second decennial meeting of each movement, it was decided to schedule them in the same summer, in near-by cities, and in immediate sequence one to the other. Thus "Life and Work" met at Oxford in July 1937, "Faith and Order" at Edinburgh in August. Both voted to join in initiating a "World Council of Churches" into which, when it should be constituted, each of the earlier movements would pour all its interests and resources.

It is well to refresh our memories as to the simple and unpretentious basis, structure and functions of the proposed World Council:

Membership will be constituted of national or confessional Church bodies "which, accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour."

The World Council will be charged with the following six functions:

"1. To carry on the work of the two world movements for Faith and Order and for Life and Work.

"2. To facilitate common action by the Churches.

"3. To promote cooperation in study.

"4. To promote the growth of ecumenical consciousness in the members of all Churches.

"5. To establish relations with denominational federations of world-wide scope and with other ecumenical movements.

"6. To call world conferences on specific subjects as occasion may require, such conferences being empowered to publish their findings."

Apart from its responsibility to carry forward already existing work and "to take action on behalf of constituent Churches *in such matters as one or more of them may commit to it*," the authority of the Council is strictly limited to "offering counsel and providing opportunity of united action in matters of common interest." Indeed, the Constitution specifically provides that "the World Council shall not legislate for the Churches; nor shall it act for them in any manner except as indicated above or as may hereafter be specified by the constituent Churches."

Basic authority in the discharge of these functions is to rest in an *Assembly*, to meet once in five years, and to be composed of not over 450 delegates carefully allocated among the member Churches throughout the world.

A *Central Committee* of 90 members similarly allocated is to meet annually. A smaller *Executive Committee* will handle interim matters.

There is provision for a *secretariate*. It is anticipated that the secretariate will have at least four headquarters

—at Geneva, London, New York and some point in the Far East.

Strictly speaking, the World Council stems directly from only two of the previously existing world Christian bodies—the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work and the World Conference on Faith and Order. Strictly, its Constitution charges the Council with responsibility mainly for the continuation of activities which properly fell within the province of these two parent movements. Actually, from the earliest projection of the World Council, it has been the whole sweep and range of all world-wide Christian organizations of the several types which the planners of the Council have held steadily in their view. There will be no effort and no proposal to persuade any of these other bodies to alter its status or enter into restrictive relationships with the World Council. But the new Council is specifically charged with responsibility “to establish relations with denominational federations of world-wide scope and with other ecumenical movements.” •

Throughout the careful step-by-step process of conceiving and bringing into being this new world Christian body, leaders of all the other major world movements—the World’s Y.M.C.A.s and Y.W.C.A.s, the World’s Student Christian Federation, the International Missionary Council, the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, and also the world associations of the various denominations—have been present by virtue of their positions within Life and Work and Faith and Order. Leaders of all shared in the discussions at Utrecht in May 1938, when the Constitution of the

Council was formally drafted and adopted. The final relationship which the World Council will hold to these various bodies, whether of cooperation, of structural co-ordination, or, in certain instances, of actual merger, cannot now be foreseen. These are matters to be worked out through gradual evolutionary development. They will almost certainly follow a number of different patterns in the case of different types of world bodies, or even of different organizations within the same general type. Here is a question which is stimulating speculation, but in no sense stirring apprehension among the bodies concerned.

In the case of the International Missionary Council and the World Council, the outworking of the most fruitful relationship is of special importance, partly because of the intimate common concerns of the two bodies, partly because of the need of each for the largest gifts from the other, partly also because the Younger Churches will hold membership in both, and they naturally are anxious to know their relative responsibilities to each. While no decisions have yet been taken, one may note a growing conviction on the part of leaders in both organizations that some form of unification should ultimately be consummated.

By such modest structure and programs, the Churches are feeling their way towards more adequate service to their world and, in their confident hope, towards fuller realization of their Lord's reported prayer "that they all may be one."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The historical developments thus briefly summarized are more adequately set forth in *For the Healing of the Nations*, pp. 137-153.

*iv*

Thus far we have spoken of one evidence of a "gathering tide of Christian union" in varied manifestations—the appearance of world Christian fellowships or organizations. We have viewed the impulse towards Christian Unity only in a world-wide perspective. However, this is only one phase, though a momentous phase, of the Movement of Consolidation.

All the while that these developments on a world scale were taking place, in various geographical areas scattered throughout the earth individual Communion or national Churches were approaching each other and exploring possibilities for full organic unions. Moreover, these dignified, grave and open flirtations were eventuating in a remarkable crop of consummated marriages.

In the decade from 1927 to 1936, no less than fifty-three definite approaches towards Church union were undertaken in various parts of the world. Fifteen resulted in full and final unions. Some of these took place between members of the same great Christian clan as in the union in Scotland of the United Free Church with the Church of Scotland (both Presbyterian), or of the several Methodist bodies of Great Britain.<sup>2</sup> These might be regarded as marriages of cousins. But others embraced Churches of very different clans, as in the United Church of Canada which joins representatives of each of the three main Protestant types—Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists. Indeed, contrary to every law of

<sup>2</sup> There are three principal family types within Protestantism—the Episcopal, the Presbyterian and the Congregational.

logic and normal anticipation, more than half of both courtships and marriages took place between so-called "unrelated" types of Churches, less than half between those with historic family affinities. Communion which participated in organic mergers in this period include Baptists, Congregationalists, Disciples of Christ, Evangelicals, Methodists, Presbyterians, Reformed, and United Brethren. Additional Churches which have granted mutual recognition of equal authenticity and validity include Anglicans, Lutherans and Old Catholics. Meanwhile, Anglican, Moravian, Orthodox, and Syrian Orthodox Churches have all been engaged in serious discussions looking towards organic union. It is noteworthy that, of the fifteen full and final Church unions during the decade, seven occurred among the Younger Churches—a record all out of proportion to their number and strength.

In the meantime, studies carried forward especially by the Faith and Order Movement have greatly clarified the question as to precisely where the greatest obstacles to Christian reunion lie.<sup>3</sup>

The earth is still peopled by hundreds of diverse and often competing sects. In terms of numbers of mergers towards the distant goal of the ultimate reunion of Christendom, the advance thus far may appear insignificant. But in terms of principle—the surmounting of basic obstacles and the establishing of normative precedents—the progress achieved is likely to surprise the most skept-

<sup>3</sup> The present situation in that regard is given in briefest summary in the section "The Outlook for Church Union" on pages 163 ff.

tical. It may be summarized in this fact—if *either of two proposed unions now under promising negotiation should achieve consummation* (either the “South India Scheme” or the union of American Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches), *every principal Church of non-Roman Christendom would be, directly or indirectly, in relations of full organic union or of mutual recognition with every other.*

v

We have traced the historical record to the summer of 1937.

Think of the succeeding five years. Just as the representatives of two-thirds of Christendom were assembling at Oxford and Edinburgh, the two greatest nations of the Far East, harboring two of the strongest Younger Christian Churches, became locked in life and death struggle. A year later, Europe almost broke into flame at Munich. Within another twelvemonth, the conflagration had been touched off. Each succeeding month witnessed its inexorable fires sweep across Europe, jump the Mediterranean to Africa, and spread onward through the Near East into Asia and up towards “the gates of India.” Then came the assault on Russia. Finally, on the eve of Christmas 1941, Japan, the United States and most of the remaining nations of the world were caught in the common fate. It has been well argued that this is, in a profound sense, the “First World War.” Far beyond its predecessor, it has embroiled in active participation and suffering almost every people on earth. Every people

knows that their fate for decades ahead hangs upon its outcome.

In this tragic five-year period, while the world has been progressively breaking asunder, what has been happening to the Churches' efforts towards Christian Unity? Apparently, there have been few if any quinquenniums in the whole of Christian history which have witnessed so many, so diverse, so widespread, and so successful moves for closer inter-church comity, cooperation and even unification. This has been true both in the more limited and immediate phase of relations between particular Churches and in the broader and more ultimate sense of the advance of the world-wide ecumenical movement. Here is the pith of the record of the past five years.

To begin with the phase of the Movement of Consolidation whose earlier developments have just been sketched—organic Church union. We noted that the decade from 1927 to 1936 yielded fifty-three approaches towards Church union and fifteen consummated full and final unifications. The five years since record forty-three instances of progress and six additional mergers. The latter have occurred in France, in China, in Japan, in Italy and in the United States. In unions or negotiations, Churches representing nineteen great divisions of Christendom have participated. These include all whose names have been given in connection with the 1927-1936 period, and several additional ones, especially from the Eastern Orthodox groups. Once again, it is noteworthy that over half of the instances of progress and two of the five mergers come from lands of the Younger Churches.

The present conflict has put Ecumenical Christianity to the supreme test. In a world seared and sundered by the ruptures of global war, what possibility of maintaining a *world* movement remained? Amidst a humanity rent into embattled segments, what reality could be preserved by a universal spiritual fellowship, by a *World Community*?

We have noted that Ecumenical Christianity when War overtook it consisted not of a single organization but rather of a group of autonomous but intimately co-operative movements. These are of two major classes—the world outreach of Protestant Missions *and* the several world-wide interdenominational bodies. The latter include organizations long antedating the current trend towards Christian Unity, notably the World's Young Men's Christian Associations, the World's Young Women's Christian Associations, the World's Student Christian Federation, the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, and the European Central Bureau for Inter-Church Aid. To these has latterly been added the World Council of Churches (in Process of Formation), youngest but also most officially representative, most comprehensive and potentially most influential of the group.

The record of the World Mission in wartime, perhaps the most conclusive concrete proof of the reality of the Christian World Community, has already been outlined. It must never be forgotten that this history is a chapter within the chronicle of Ecumenical Christianity.

Fortunately, all of the major ecumenical organizations have their world headquarters in Geneva, the last centrally located oasis free from direct involvement and continuously in contact with the whole world. Cooperation among these six or more bodies was already a practice of long habit and was steadily increasing. Their moving sense of common responsibility before the special demands of wartime has quickened ever closer coordination. An *Emergency Committee of Christian Organizations* has been formed to unify the efforts of them all. Today collaboration is so continuous and so intimate that, for all practical purposes, these bodies are functioning as a single united Ecumenical Christian Movement.

The World Council, projected on the eve of the fiercest conflict in history, moves steadily forward without abatement of effort or hope. It can come into being only as each of the prospective constituent Churches through official action of its governing body accepts membership. Month by month as the war clouds darkened and widened and then the tornado struck, one after another of the invited Churches signified adherence to the Council. Between the drafting of the Constitution at Utrecht in May 1938 and the precipitation of hostilities sixteen months later, forty-eight Churches had taken membership. During the first three years of the war, thirty others joined. Today, the Council's membership totals seventy-eight Churches. They are located in twenty-eight nations and on every continent. They represent all the more important Communion of Protestantism and also several branches of Eastern Orthodoxy, in all some twenty different Christian affiliations. They include most

of the larger Churches in western lands except those under Nazi domination. Although invitations have thus far been extended to but few of the Younger Churches, their enthusiasm for the Council is indicated by prompt acceptances from China, the Philippines, the Netherlands East Indies, Mexico, the West Indies and most recently Brazil—the latter the first member-Church from the South American continent. Geographical, denominational and theological comprehensiveness is suggested in the membership roll <sup>4</sup> as it stands up to January 1, 1943. To complete the roll, one Church which cannot be named because of its peril under Nazi rule should be added.

Had the War not intervened, the initial meeting of the Assembly at which the World Council of Churches will be formally constituted would have been held in North America in the summer of 1941. These plans have been halted in mid-stream. Technically the Council is still "in process of formation." But the consummation has been deferred not abandoned. In the meantime, its promise is kept alive and many of its functions are being discharged through an active "Provisional Committee" with the Archbishop of Canterbury as Chairman, and through a secretariate headquartered at Geneva, London and New York.

*vii*

What, it may well be asked, can the Ecumenical Movement actually do under present conditions? Its activities fall into three main types:

<sup>4</sup> See below pp. 183 ff.

It is continuing, so far as circumstances permit, its normal functions, such as the dissemination of news of World Christianity throughout its membership, the promotion of world-wide study of basic issues, the furnishing of a variety of services to national bodies.

It has undertaken certain distinctive ministries to special needs resulting from the War, such as spiritual and physical assistance to prisoners of war of all nationalities, relief to refugees, training of an educated leadership for countries whose normal educational institutions have become war casualties. These it performs in behalf of all the Churches.

It is maintaining communication and living spiritual fellowship between Christians of enemy nations and their Churches.

Some of the Movement's program may be indicated in the following brief paragraphs:

### *Prisoners of War*

In the first weeks of the War, officials of the Ecumenical Movement initiated negotiations with each of the major belligerent governments to assure that services to prisoners which had been developed on such an extensive scale during the last War might again be undertaken and safeguarded. These negotiations were gratifyingly successful. Great freedom has been secured to all recognized neutral agencies for their varied ministries.

An *Ecumenical Commission for Chaplaincy Service to Prisoners of War* was formed under the unofficial direction of World Council officers. Within the total range of services to prisoners its assignment is direct

spiritual ministry. The Churches have set themselves to provide chaplains in all the camps and to supply Bibles and other religious literature. Where pastors are not available among the prisoners, ministers of the enemy country in which the camps are located may serve. In the first year when the total of prisoners on both sides could be counted in thousands, a rather complete scheme of spiritual services was inaugurated. Now when numbers mount into millions, the demands are overwhelming. For example, in a nine-month period, through the generous assistance of the American Bible Society some 60,000 Bibles were furnished to prisoners in Germany. A single camp demanded five thousand New Testaments. We have already had occasion to observe the organization of regular parishes among French prisoners and to sense something of the vitality of this service and its meaning to the beneficiaries.

At the same time, the *War Prisoners Aid of the Y.M.C.A.* undertakes to provide books, games and other essentials for the physical and intellectual welfare of the prisoners. The *World's Y.W.C.A.* renders similar services to women internees.

All Christian organizations work in closest coordination with the *International Red Cross* through which food parcels are furnished to the prisoners and their vast correspondence is transmitted.

Only those who have experienced at first hand the decimating effects upon mind and soul as well as body of protracted confinement under the bitter conditions of prison camp can fully appraise this work in its several

coordinated aspects. Its initial appeal is as a task of mercy. But it is more than that. From among these millions of young men from all nations must come a large proportion of their tomorrow's leadership. Ministry to prisoners of war is safeguarding physical, intellectual and spiritual health for that leadership. That such ministry should be furnished by the united resources of the great world agencies of mercy which overpass all divisions is itself something of a promise of the world which awaits their devotion.

### *Refugees*

Ecumenical concern for the desperate fate of political refugees, especially Non-Aryan Christians, antedates the War. The conflict has gravely aggravated already nearly insoluble problems. Again a special agency has been created, the *Ecumenical Commission for Refugees*, under the control of the World Council. Again all work is in close collaboration with the many admirable organizations which labor tirelessly in behalf of the tens of thousands of destitute fugitives from totalitarian tyranny. They are scattered far and wide beyond the borders of that tyranny across southern and western Europe—in colonies in every city of the Balkans and Switzerland, in congested and noxious camps in France and Portugal, in forced-work battalions in occupied territories and Africa, and as solitary individuals and families driven from hamlet to hamlet in quest of crust and roof.

Existence in the French refugee camps defies portrayal. But the state of individuals beyond the camps is

often worse. Happily for our peace of mind, conditions under the veil of silence in eastern Europe remain largely unknown, except that they are known to exceed the worst that is known.

The constantly changing contours of this dark drama, its ever-deepening shadows, are suggested in the fact that the major part of the pitifully small Church funds available had to be directed in 1939 to succoring escaping Czechoslovaks, in 1940 to assisting emigrations from Germany, in 1941 to direct relief in France. The special responsibility of the *Ecumenical Commission for Refugees* concerns spiritual needs, but how can help be compartmentalized where hunger, disease, loneliness, fear, despair weave a single pattern of misery which ravages the whole person? The directors are furnishing a dozen different kinds of aid in every major area. Latterly assistance has been channelled especially to internees in Southern France. Here prolonged near-starvation takes an ever heavier toll of illness and death. "Special barracks have had to be put up for those who are suffering from disease due to hunger, and for others who are perishing from starvation and whom no treatment on earth can help."

Into such massed destitution, representatives of the Ecumenical Movement bring such food and clothing as their meager resources permit. Probably their larger contributions flow from their own spirits of compassion and faith, and from the many schemes for spiritual and mental reinvigoration which their inspired ingenuity devises. Books are built up into camp libraries, the library at Gurs in

Southern France totalling 5,000 volumes. Concerts and lectures on a great variety of subjects are arranged. In one camp a small group of Protestants, assisted by several of the Christian organizations, founded a school, opened studies and workshops for arts and crafts, and organized sports and other forms of recreation, besides arranging lectures of various kinds. In another a kindergarten "helps to save 1,600 destitute children from physical and moral ruin."

In all these labors, members of the French Protestant Youth Movement have played a major rôle, electing to share the existence and deprivations of the persecuted exiles in their midst. In half a dozen camps, they have equipped and staffed refugee foyers, "Baraque Protestante."

In the realest sense, the heart of all that takes place is Christian faith. It is faith which sustains life when bodies ache for nourishment. It is faith which restores hope where every earthly resource has gone. It is *ecumenical* faith, for its ministries spring from the practical solicitude of Christians of many lands and creeds, and those ministries nourish Christian fellowship which is in quite unique degree ecumenical.

"In the room in the 'Baraque Protestante' in which divine service is held, we find a crucifix simply carved by a refugee, and also a number of roughly-hewn benches. Formerly the underfed worshippers often had to stand for two or three hours while the service was conducted in two languages, most of those present partaking of the Holy Communion. But there is never a word of impatience. 'They hunger and they thirst' for the living word.

No service is too long for them. The congregations are truly ecumenical. All Christian denominations, except the Roman Catholic Church, and thirty different nationalities are here represented. They form one united whole founded on the one Word of God."

### *Youth*

Long before the totalitarian regimes forced attention to the strategic significance of youth, World Christianity had been guided by a not dissimilar strategy. All three of the ecumenical organizations which date from the last century were concerned with young people. It was Christian youth who first formed truly ecumenical fellowships. In that as in other respects, they pioneered Ecumenical Christianity.

Undoubtedly, the Nazi and Communist drives for youth has further spurred this aspect of Christian activity. The last in the chain of ecumenical assemblies which preceded the War was the World Conference of Christian Youth meeting in Amsterdam in July 1939, almost as the armies were mobilizing.<sup>5</sup> The War cut short extensive plans for the projection of its influence. But that influence continues through its members. In Shanghai an "Amsterdam Fellowship" organized speaking tours and distributed publications to spread its message. Dutch delegates sent greetings to Amsterdam members throughout the world so long as communication was possible. As we

<sup>5</sup> This was the most widely representative gathering of Christians, or for that matter of men and women, which has ever come together. Its membership embraced 1,350 official delegates from 71 countries representing 220 separately organized religious bodies and national Churches.

noted earlier, two years after Amsterdam, Belgian students organized their first Ecumenical Youth Conference despite the strictures of occupation. In the Balkans and in Free China conferences for fellowship and study have been held by these undiscourageable young people.

The more vital energies of Christian youth have always followed a thoroughly practical bent. In peace-time as in war, the manifold service of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations have reached out through their World Alliances into far corners of the earth. It was the Y.M.C.A. which sponsored a gigantic ministry to prisoners of war of all nationalities in the First World War. Again the *War Prisoners Aid of the Y.M.C.A.* and the World Staff of the *Y.W.C.A.* bear major responsibility in services to prisoners and internees with special concern for their recreational needs.

In the last War Christian students organized a very considerable relief scheme through which some hundreds of thousands of dollars were raised to assist fellow-students in destitution and in prison-camps. Today, students in need are far more numerous, their plight far more desperate. From the first months of the Sino-Japanese conflict when most of the Chinese universities were destroyed or confiscated and China's students began their heroic trek overland to create new universities where they could continue training for their nation's leadership, students in other lands have been helping towards their support. When the war spread to Europe, the Protestant ecumenical youth bodies, cooperating with Catholic youth and with International Student Service, reconsti-

tuted the *European Student Relief Fund*. Money contributed by students in lands where giving is still possible and permitted is channelled through Geneva to sustain a dozen different types of aid in almost as many countries. In *Lithuania, Hungary and Rumania*, *Polish* students are kept alive physically and mentally. In *Switzerland*, some eight hundred students among the thousands of interned *French* and *Polish* soldiers are organized into "internee universities" where they continue their studies under professors recruited from senior internees. In *France*, *Spanish* students who are fugitives from Franco's terrorism and *Czech* students exiled since 1938 are assisted to live and work. In *Germany*, "Universities in Captivity" are set up to provide a diversified education of standard rank for *Belgian, Dutch* and *British* prisoners. In *Canada*, a member of the staff gives full time to service among *German* prisoners and *Central European* internees. Now negotiations are moving towards agreement to permit extension of relief to *American* prisoners in *Japan*. A single picture from a German prison-camp must suffice to represent a dozen which might be added from Switzerland, France, Canada. The General Secretary of the European Student Relief Fund visits the "University in Oflag VI B" where most British officers who are prisoners in Germany are confined:

"Some 2,800 prisoners are in this camp. Nearly all of them are engaged in one form of study or another. As we talk, officers go in and out, bringing back some books they have read, and looking at those still on the shelves to see if the kind of material they want is obtainable.

Most of the 3,000 volumes in the library are in circulation. . . .

"Major V. shows me the program of the courses, a very full program which covers most branches of knowledge. The camp university is divided into six sections, each one headed by a qualified instructor. The most important one is the section on Engineering which offers fifteen courses including Higher Mathematics, Electrotechnology, Chemistry and Physics. The program of the section of Arts is very eclectic as it ranges from water color painting and Anatomy to History and Philosophy. It is headed by Lt. F. who paints excellent water colors himself. The section of languages teaches ten different ones, among them Arabic, Urdu, Malay, Tamil and Gaelic. The section of Law is very well attended, as are the sections of Agriculture and Commerce. The total number of courses amounts to 168 hours weekly. There are further classes for orderlies which cover eight subjects and are given at the rate of sixteen hours a week. . . .

"The great concern at present is the preparation for the examinations. Some fifty English educational bodies have granted permission for their examinations to be taken in the camp. Two hundred and eighty-one students have registered and are preparing for them."

Throughout the last War, the *World's Student Christian Federation* maintained its fellowship unbroken. It was virtually the only international organization to achieve that record.<sup>6</sup> In the present conflict, at least five of its member bodies have been compelled to withdraw. Almost half of its membership is under alien domination. Nevertheless, its fellowship continues unshattered and undismayed. Its *News Sheet* for a single month reports these items:

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *For the Healing of the Nations*, pp. 139-142.

The Netherlands Student Christian Movement voluntarily disbanded in protest against anti-Semitic regulations. But work continues vigorously. Five hundred students from Dutch universities join in the Universal Day of Prayer for Students.

The S.C.M. in *Brussels* has not been affected by the occupation. They still feel themselves strongly linked with the Federation.

A correspondent in *Greece* writes, "We feel deeply the absence of fellowship with Christian souls in other countries. . . . Please pray without ceasing for us as we do for you." The Rector of the University of Athens pleads for assistance since thousands of his students are starving.

From *Germany* comes word of a big regional evangelistic week for students attended by many non-members who declare that this is almost the only place where they can speak freely about their deepest concerns.

A leader of the *Soli Deo Gloria* movement in *Hungary* voices profound concern about the peace after the War.

The *Danish* Movement sends greetings. "The world movement of Christian students is, in spite of all difficulties, so strongly in our thoughts that we cannot forget it. It is part of our own work and we have learned many precious things from many students in other countries."

*Swedish* students confess their dilemma as their sympathies are tugged in opposite directions by special ties with both Norway and Finland.

A director is appointed to nourish the budding work in *Mexico*.

A conference of students in *India* inaugurates a new missionary movement.

The Executive Secretary of the *Chinese* Student Y.M.C.A. reports his adventurous escape from Shanghai to Chungking.

Two new student chaplaincies are established in *New Zealand*.

*British* theological students hold a joint conference with Roman Catholics.

Unusual difficulties beset efforts to get relief to *Serbian* prisoners of war and *Polish* refugees.

In the *United States*, the World Student Service Fund (dividing its contributions between Chinese and European student relief) exceeds its goal of \$100,000 for the year.

Recently a German army officer who, in student days, had been a leader in the German Student Christian Movement, found himself in a certain city in occupied territory where a former officer of the Student Movement of that land is now a parish minister. The latter is also a foremost organizer of the powerful underground movement of resistance against German occupation. The two met and, despite the obvious peril to both of them, spent a long evening in intimate conversation. In reporting the incident, the pastor described their fellowship as "most comforting."

### *Ecumenical Study*

The long-range task to which the Ecumenical Movement is committed is the building up of world-wide unity

among Christians speaking a dozen major tongues, rooted in a score of contrasted historic cultures, confessing allegiance to a hundred different political sovereignties, divided into six or eight great Christian factions which have been developing independent and often antagonistic traditions for a hundred, four hundred and even a thousand years. Unlike the Church of Rome, Protestant and Orthodox Churches are held together by no binding organizational ties or superior authority or even by uniform observance of a common sacrament. Their cohesion must spring solely from free and spontaneous acknowledgment of a single loyalty and the awareness of profound spiritual kinship. Obviously, true unity must be preceded by the painful achievement of understanding across the chasms of language and race and heritage. Here is a colossal educational project. To that undertaking the study programs of the World Council, initiated in preparation for the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences and still carried forward in two sections dealing respectively with the issues of "Life and Work" and of "Faith and Order," are devoted.

The procedure of the Life and Work study program is to stimulate continuous interchange of thought and discussion among Christian leaders of every principal tradition and in all parts of the world through individual correspondence, small local groups and, so far as conditions permit, occasional regional and world-wide meetings. The central theme is "The Church: Its Nature and Function." Before September 1939, its Study Commission had already enlisted the participation of some

four hundred "collaborators" chosen from foremost Church thinkers of all countries, had fostered a dozen or more active study groups and had assembled several international consultations.

Inevitably, the conflict has seriously curtailed the scope of ecumenical study. But it has heightened its relevance and in not a few instances greatly intensified its sense of urgency. Emphasis is now concentrated mainly upon "The Ethical Reality and Function of the Church" and "The Responsibility of the Church for the International Order." Also under the caption *Ecclesia Militans*, a series of important factual studies portraying what is actually taking place throughout the World Church on such matters as "Preaching in War-Time," "The Church Speaks to the World," "Present Relations between Church and State," "Modern Confessions of Faith" is being issued. More and more in the days to come attention will be claimed by problems of the Peace.

From the study headquarters in Geneva and the United States, correspondence continues regularly with collaborators throughout North America, Western Europe, China, Australasia, India, Egypt, and also the Balkans and the Far East until country after country is sealed from all free communication. Two centers, the Sigtuna Ecumenical Institute near Stockholm and the Chicago Ecumenical Study Group, carry forward extensive programs and produce materials of the highest quality. In Cairo, Agra, Ceylon, Christchurch and (prior to Pearl Harbor) Shanghai as well as in various places in the West, study groups make their contributions to the

developing ecumenical mind. Through channels which cannot be named, important documents circulate to Christian leaders within Germany, Holland, Czechoslovakia and France. Some deal with underlying questions of the Church's nature and witness, others with more immediate matters concerning the War and the Peace. Thus exchange of conviction on the most controversial issues of their faith and life continues between Christians on both sides of the conflict as they maintain intellectual collaboration over every obstacle and seek to prepare together for the labors of reconstruction.

Meanwhile scholars especially related to problems of Faith and Order quietly continue their examination of basic differences in Christians' views of "The Church" in preparation for the day when world-wide discussion of obstacles to a reunited Church of Christ can be resumed. •

*Ecumenical News*

Not the least service of the ecumenical offices in Geneva is the regular dissemination of factual information on what is taking place week by week throughout the World Church. This is accomplished mainly through a weekly news bulletin, six or eight typed pages to an issue, under the title *International Christian Press and Information Service*. Each number records about a dozen items from almost as many countries. Only those who scan these bulletins regularly or, better still, review at a sitting their record of a year's ecumenical activity can

fully grasp the sweep and vitality of the World Church in a world at war. One wishes that these rather forbidding mimeographed sheets could come weekly to the desk of every Christian minister and earnest layman.<sup>7</sup> There the notes lie side by side in an issue picked up at random, as it happens the first of the new year 1942:

British Christians send a Christmas greeting to Christians in Occupied Countries on the Continent.

The Christmas Message of the Pope to the Roman Catholic world is quoted.

The Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church is deposed and a successor nominated by the head of the puppet government in Athens.

A British missionary in Africa reports his impressions of the ordination of the first pastor to be ordained from a certain African tribe—the ordination conducted by German missionaries on the day preceding their departure for internment under British detention, with the British missionary assisting, and African Christians from more than ten tribes in attendance.<sup>8</sup>

Extended quotation from a book by one of the chief Nazi leaders gives "the National Socialist View of the Spiritual Future of the New Europe."

In Holland, the Student Christian Movement is dissolved rather than bow to the decree that Jews must be excluded from its membership.

<sup>7</sup> *The International Christian Press and Information Service* may be ordered from the American office of the World Council, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York, for \$2.50 per year, or from the Geneva offices at 41 Avenue de Champel for 10 Swiss francs.

<sup>8</sup> See above, pp. 75 f.

The situation among the Protestant Churches in Spain is described "from a trustworthy source."

The new united Church of Christ in Japan comes officially into being.

Latest steps are reported in the discussions looking toward organic union between Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches of the United States.

Nine items from four continents and nine countries on both sides of the conflict, involving Churches of at least fifty communions in all three major divisions of Christendom—Roman, Orthodox and Protestant.

### *Ecumenical Fellowship*

Dr. William Paton has recently written, "The Ecumenical Movement is not primarily a matter of organization. It is primarily a matter of personal confidence and trust\* which is the human response to an act of God, assuring His children of a unity which they have not created but which they can accept and enjoy." It can hardly be too strongly stressed that the tissue which holds this organism in life and health and which offers largest promise of growing strength consists mainly of profound understanding and mutual faith among those charged with leadership in the various branches of non-Roman Christendom. The organism continues to increase in vitality and resilience amidst the world's disintegration.

From the modest headquarters of the Ecumenical Movement in Geneva, a small corps of men and women

moves ceaselessly to and fro across the face of Europe, across every battle-line and barrier in the manifold tasks of World Christianity. Hardly more than a score in all, among them are one or more citizens of Germany, France, Great Britain, Scandinavia, Holland, Switzerland and the United States. Probably the last remaining active community drawn from both sides of the struggle and representative of most of the peoples of the earth. Living shuttles, they seem, weaving, repairing the torn and tattered garment of European civilization. Better, living tissues, healing, reviving the tortured Body of Humanity. Amidst tens of millions mobilized for mutual slaughter, a mere handful. Against the titanic agencies of destruction, weaklings. Yet their unity is stronger than any other this world knows. The influence they wield, too delicate to register in the crude calculus of man's conflict, is more enduring than any other for it is of the stuff of eternity.

One night some months ago, British planes flying over Geneva accidentally dropped bombs in the courtyard of the World Council's headquarters shattering every window. The following morning came a cablegram from one of the most aristocratic and exclusive of Protestant Communion, the Church of England, announcing its adherence to the World Council. As Dr. Visser 't Hooft, the young and brilliant Hollander who guides the Council as General Secretary, commented, "It is a curious fact that precisely at this critical moment we have so much to encourage us in our work. . . . Is this not perhaps a symbol? While bombs drop in increasing numbers, the Christian fellowship increases."

It would be a mistake to exaggerate the importance of World Christianity for world peace and world order. It cannot be too emphatically reiterated that the Christian Church is not a political instrumentality pitting its wisdom and resources against secular ideologies and governments. Moreover, though its World Community is real, vitally real, and, as it believes, indestructible, it is young and fragile. It possesses the suppleness, the resilience, the capacities for adaptation and growth of a sapling rather than the impressive and immovable strength of a mighty oak. Even more important, its reality is as yet a controlling force upon only small numbers of its professed adherents. Significantly, its influence is strongest upon the foremost leaders of the Churches.

The services of the World Church to world order are primarily these:

1. *It is raising up here and there into leadership in the nations world-minded men and women.* There is little hope for a fairer earth in this generation unless, when the forces of tyranny shall have been halted, a new leadership is prepared to step forward to conceive and create that fairer world. Those leaders must have a certain specific equipment. They must be irrevocably, undiscourageably committed to the realization of world peace through world community. They must be educated in the cost of a World Society, a cost to be paid mainly in sacrifice of immediate national self-interest—a cost without whose payment the mere ideal and desire, however

admirable, are the veriest moonshine. They must be prepared to advocate the payment of that price especially by their own nation. Most important of all, they must be men and women deeply schooled within their own experience in the living reality of World Community.

Today there is only one World Community raising up world-minded, world-committed leaders throughout the world. Even today, that training still goes forward clean round the world. It is taking place in tens of thousands of individual centers located in almost every land, among every race and people, through local fellowships of the Christian Church. It is taking place partly through exposure of individual Christians to the convictions and ideals of Christian faith. It is taking place partly through introduction of individual Christians into communities of men drawn from diverse nations and races where the ideal of a community of all peoples receives partial but powerful realization.

There is no telling in what obscure places, from what modest and unimpressive institutions—Christian schools and colleges, Christian hospitals and churches—these leaders may and do arise. The strength and importance of World Christianity are to be found, not in this or that instance of exceptionally striking work, but in the Christian Movement in its entirety, its whole sweep and range—an impact effected by the combined influence of innumerable enterprises, many of meager size and equipment, scattered in many countries to the ends of the earth.

The Christian Church is the only world-wide agency

or institution furnishing training for a World Society through actual induction into its reality.

2. *The World Church keeps reiterating for all with ears to hear the only basis upon which World Order can be securely founded*—recognition of the essential and indissoluble brotherhood of all mankind under the common Fatherhood of the Living Sovereign of all humanity. World Order must be grounded in the reality of World Community. World Community, while clearly the dictate of political and economic necessity, while clearly the next logical stage in the evolution of mankind's institutions, will hardly be achieved unless the inexorable push of history is preceded and made effective by the complementary pull of clear conviction of the right. As with every other great advance in the social ordering of man's life, preaching of the ideal by the prophets of that ideal pioneers the way; shrewd counsels of expediency lumber stumblingly behind. Together they effect the advance which is at once "good business" and the Will of God for his blundering and willful children.

By its proclamation of Christ's principles of justice, mercy, trust and fellowship, and by its so meager introduction of the reality of those virtues into men's practice, the Church also provides something of the atmosphere in which World Community once recognized can come into being and endure.

3. The World Church is not only preaching the ideal of World Community. *It is experimenting in the conditions and methods of world community.* From its experi-

ence much has been learned of the practical circumstances under which such community can be built and maintained, sound and lasting. In one area after another of unsurveyed problems, such as the ways of transcending barriers of language, race and tradition, it has prospected pathways by which other world organizations can grope their course. It has furnished a testing-ground in the conditions of ecumenical cooperation. For example, one of the foremost leaders of the League of Nations once gave it as his judgment that the most significant experimentation making possible a sound and stable community of nations had taken place within one of the member organizations of the Ecumenical Movement.

4. Most important of all, the Church is *exemplifying in its own life the reality of World Community*. The very existence of World Christianity, shaken but unshattered by forces which have shattered virtually every other international structure and fellowship, is holding before those who have eyes to see the reality of a World Community which no human force can destroy—a rebuke to the nations of the unreality of their conflicts, but also an earnest, a promise to humanity of the Community of Nations which yet may be, and something of a foretaste of its reality.

In the oft-repeated words of the Madras Conference: "Thus in broken and imperfect fashion, the Church is even now fulfilling its calling to be within itself a foretaste of the redeemed family of God which He has purposed humanity to be."

*ix*

What is the secret of this extraordinary record of fact and possibility? I do not know a better summary of it than in the Archbishop of Canterbury's sermon on the occasion of his enthronement:

"As though in preparation for such a time as this, God has been building up a Christian fellowship which now extends into almost every nation, and binds citizens of them all together in true unity and mutual love. No human agency has planned this. It is the result of the great missionary enterprise of the last hundred and fifty years. . . . Almost incidentally, the great world-fellowship has arisen from that enterprise. But it has arisen; it is the great new fact of our time. . . .

"Here is one great ground of hope for the coming days—this world-wide Christian fellowship, this ecumenical movement. . . ."

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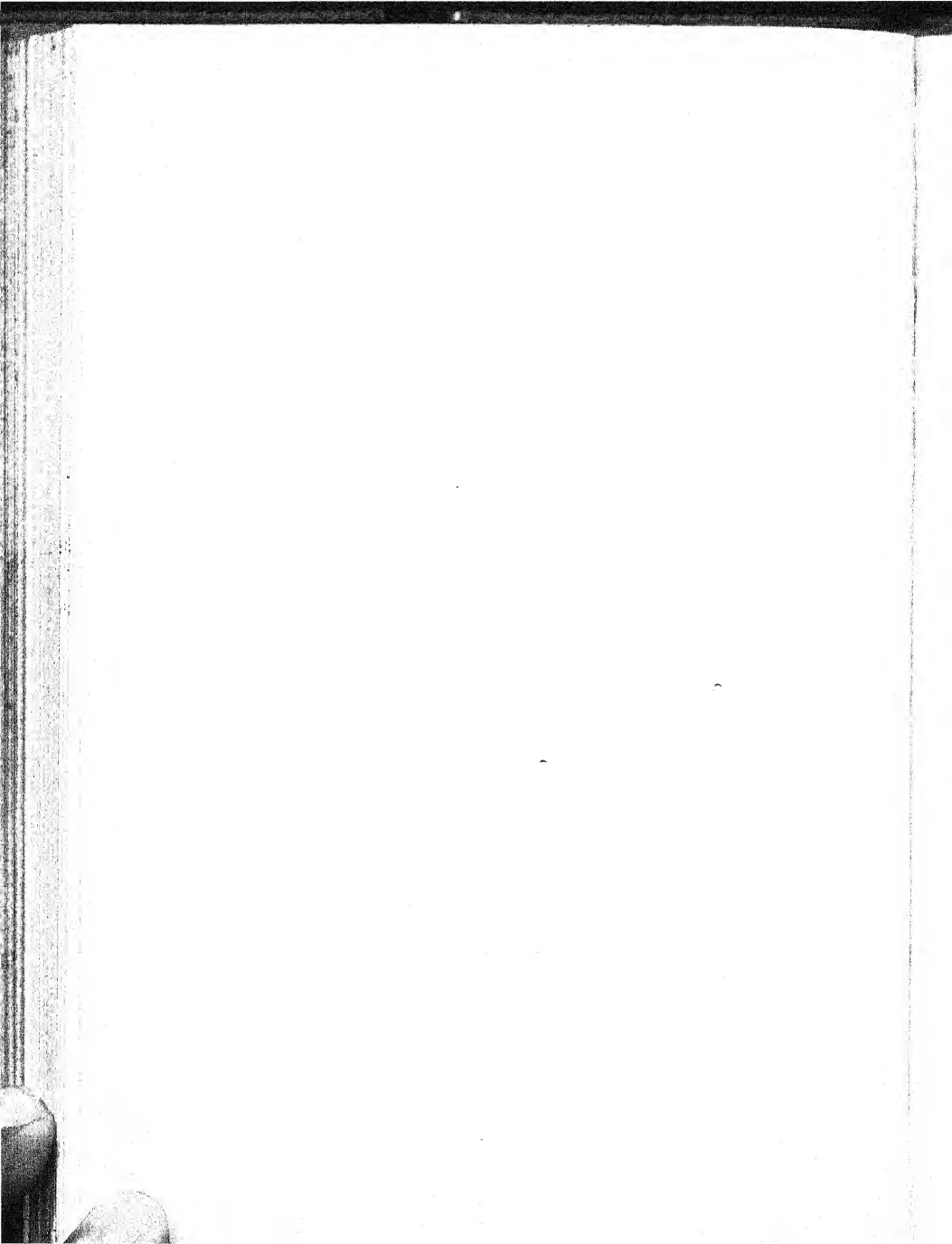


# *Conclusion*

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WORLD CHRISTIANITY YESTERDAY  
AND TOMORROW





# *World Christianity*

## *Yesterday and Tomorrow*

AT ONCE THE MOST HACKNEYED AND the truest comment which can be made about the times through which we are passing is that this is an Age of Transition. Each successive month drives this fact home more inescapably even upon those who tire of a phrase reiterated wearisomely since earliest memories or those who constitutionally resist the prospect of basic and radical change. An Age of Transition not merely in the obvious sense that all periods are times of mutation. But in the far more drastic sense that this is one of the great transition epochs, one of the four or five during the Christian Era, some would affirm one of the four or five in the recorded history of man. In Berdyaev's phrase, we are witnessing *The End of Our Time*.

### ii

Furthermore it is not the present War which forms or even reveals the deeper character of this age. Just here appears one of the most disturbing paradoxes of these confused and contradictory times.

It is a truism that the past half-century has been marked by the steady accentuation and advance towards crisis of five great conflicts in the life of mankind. They are not unrelated but they may be clearly distinguished.

One has been the struggle between imperial might and the increasing self-assertion of subject and backward peoples, what is frequently spoken of as the conflict of East and West.

Another has been the mounting tension between white and non-white races throughout the world, the race issue.

A third has been the conflict between the principle of nationalism and the principle of universalism in world affairs, a struggle which came to impermanent decision in the launching of the League of Nations.

Still another has dominated the sphere of industry, between traditional capitalist enterprise and a rising socialist economy.

Then there has been the even deeper cultural issue which has much occupied Christians, between advancing secularism and a spiritual interpretation of human existence.

Now it is a striking though obvious fact that, in not a single instance do the alignments of allies and enemies in this War coincide with the lines of cleavage in the five great areas of conflict whose tensions have so largely created the pattern of recent history. On the contrary, nations adhering to *each* of the embattled groups in *each* of the five areas are discovered linked in alliance within *both* coalitions of antagonists in the present struggle.

The great imperial powers of Britain and America are rightly recognized as champions of the weaker and subject peoples of Asia and Africa against imperial Germany and imperial Japan with whom are allied, with whatever misgivings, frustrated Baltic and Balkan nations.

Representatives of both white and non-white races appear in each camp.

Voices of both the nationalist and the universal principles for world governance speak behind the propaganda of each.

Capitalist Britain and the United States make common cause with communist Russia against the pseudo-socialism of Germany and Italy associated with a Japan which still maintains many basic features of an individualist capitalist economy.

The nation which has gone farthest in the ruthless outlawing of religion joins hands with nations which profess themselves defenders of a Christian civilization against Japan which, of all the major antagonists, grants religion the most integral place in its culture, yet is partner to the protagonists of militant paganism.

In brief, the lines of cleavage which have seared and scarred the fabric of modern civilization with ever deepening crises run directly across the lines of opposition in this Armageddon which holds virtually all mankind in its grip.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, whichever side should emerge victorious,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Raoul de Roussy de Sales in *The Making of Tomorrow*, pp. 1 f. "There are two series of conflicts going on at the same time: the vertical conflicts in which nations fight one another, and the horizontal conflicts which are ideological, political, social and economic. The latter . . . form the pattern of revolution which serves as a backdrop for the actual battles which are carried on on land, on sea, and in the air. . . . That the vertical conflicts are frequently in apparent or real opposition to the horizontal ones is a fact which cannot be denied. . . . Few men are able to consider objectively the constant changes which take place in this multi-dimensional crisis and most of them have a tendency to emphasize one aspect of the problems to the detriment of the others."

there is no certainty that any one of the five pre-war conflicts would find solution in the outcome. On the contrary it is not improbable that each of the five will remain and will reappear in renewed tension amid the readjustments of the post-war era.<sup>2</sup>

Further, this paradox confronts us with the probable character of Tomorrow's World. It compels us to the realization that Allied victory may assure triumph for none of the great goals of human advance towards which socially minded Christians have given their allegiance and bent their energies through recent decades. It may merely secure the *possibility* of their realization. It may announce the termination of a brief though critical interlude in the *main* drama of the modern era and a resumption of the earlier and more basic struggles within our society. For it is on the sound and peaceful solution of these five great conflicts that the hope of a better tomorrow so largely rests.

It is with those longer perspectives that we are primarily concerned. We shall hold our thought within the orbit of the deeper issues as we seek to descry something of World Christianity's rôle in days ahead.

### iii

In any Age of Transition so profound and crucial as this, men's first recourse should be to the guidance of

<sup>2</sup> Even should one of the problems win a measure of amelioration within a limited area during the conflict, as in India or among the American Negroes, it would be less a direct fulfillment of the major goals of the War than a grumbling concession to expedient necessity.

history. Our strongest aid, and our most trustworthy encouragement, is historic perspective.

Probably the greatest service of Christian scholarship to these times, and one of the most valuable in the history of the Church, is being rendered by Professor Kenneth S. Latourette in his monumental *History of the Expansion of Christianity*. This work, projected in seven large volumes and now nearing completion, furnishes a single comprehensive conspectus of the whole nineteen centuries' pilgrimage of the Christian Movement such as it has never previously possessed. It is invaluable for its detailed chronicle, century by century and area by area. But not less for certain broad generalizations firmly grounded upon the mass of accurate and exhaustive facts.<sup>3</sup>

The most basic and inclusive generalization to which Professor Latourette is led is that, across the whole nineteen hundred years, the Christian Movement has swept in ever wider circles and penetrated with ever deeper influence upon the life of the human race.

Indeed, to a superficial glance its development conveys an impression of steady progression. Closer scrutiny discovers that progress has not been steady. Rather it has taken place by a series of great sweeps of alternate advance and recession. Dr. Latourette likens them to the movement of a tide in recurrent flow and ebb.

The historian clearly detects four massive epochs of march and retreat.

<sup>3</sup> The main outlines of the history and the major conclusions are embodied in several briefer summaries, most notably *Anno Domini* and *The Unquenchable Light*.

1. The earliest, stemming directly from the initial impulse in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and pressed forward by the amazing vitality of the Early Church, carried the Christian Movement through roughly five centuries until it had penetrated almost every outpost of its original cultural milieu—the world of Graeco-Roman civilization, the sway of the Pax Romana; had won recognition as the official religion of the Empire; and had achieved such secure rootage, such over-spreading organization and such intrinsic vitality that it was strong to endure when its surrounding and supporting political, economic and cultural environment crumbled. Not only to endure but to bear within its own organism most of the accumulated wealth of knowledge, art and government which were preserved in the world which survived the cataclysm. “No religious revolution of comparable dimensions had ever before been wrought in so brief a time. . . . Never before had any religion gained the allegiance of so large a percentage of civilized men. Indeed, never since has any religion supplanted its rivals among so extensive a proportion of mankind.” This first era bore the Christian Movement upon its wave of initial dispersion to approximately A.D. 500.

Then the tide turned. There succeeded a long period of severe decline. It lasted for almost as long as the first great advance, from 500 to about 950. Professor Latourette points out that it inflicted both the most protracted and the most perilous setbacks which Christianity has ever suffered. The disintegration of Roman Rule, the conquests of the Mediterranean basin by successive bar-

barian hordes from the North, the even more threatening invasions by the Moslem Arabs from the South and Southeast—all these together wrested from the Church a full half of the territories which at 500 had been at least nominally Christian, including the lands of its birth and earliest establishment; and estranged a very large proportion of its professed adherents. Never in succeeding centuries has the retreat of the Christian Movement before hostile forces been so general and so drastic. By the close of the tenth century, Christianity had been reduced to a fraction of its greatest previous strength. It appeared condemned to permanent insignificance, if not to extinction.

2. Then occurred the first of the miracles of revival and recovery. Another great forward movement set in. It continued for some four centuries, roughly from 950 to 1350. It embraced the great Middle Ages. It pressed the geographical extension of the Christian Movement far beyond its earlier outmost penetration—to Scandinavia and Russia in the North; to Turkestan, India and China to the East. It saw Christianity establish itself as the formative heart of culture at the energizing seat of the new civilization, in Europe. Throughout the Roman Era, Christianity had struggled to win recognition as one religion, then *the* Religion within a culture dominated by the political power of Rome. Now it widely displaced political rulers as the imperious lord of all existence.

But again vitality slackened. Internal decay due to intellectual skepticism as well as moral profligacy set in.

External attack, as before most vigorous in the form of resurgent Mohammedanism, pressed hard. The flood wave reached its crest, broke and fell back. The familiar features were re-enacted—expulsion from frontier outposts, shrinking of the range of influence, shrivelling of effectiveness. Christianity was again confined largely within the borders of Europe. Sterility and corruption corroded the power of the Church. The century and a half from 1350 to 1500 marked a period of relapse and loss. This second major phase of regression also threatened to emasculate the Christian Movement and to reduce it to an inconsequential rôle in the world drama.

3. But once more recession was followed by another and still more extended advance. It carried the Christian Movement through about two hundred and fifty years from 1500 to the mid-eighteenth century. This is the era initiated by the birth of Protestantism. It was signalized by great creative and expansive energies generated from a stringent catharsis of purification and reform within Roman Catholicism as well as in Protestantism. Again expansion was geographic, intellectual and cultural. Moving largely though not exclusively on the crest of the daring adventures of explorers and empire-builders, the Christian Movement planted churches for the first time in North America, among the territories of Spanish and Portuguese conquest in South America, along the coasts of Africa, across Siberia, in Burma, Siam, Indo-China and the islands of the Pacific. It re-established outposts in India and China. In the Philip-

pinos and certain Dutch East Indian Islands, Christianity actually became the faith of a majority of the native peoples. Meanwhile, the Church continued to give form and structure and power to culture.

Nevertheless the sweeping tides of extension did not continue unbroken. According to a pattern by now becoming habitual, an ebb again set in. This time it was briefer and less severe than its predecessors. But the period from 1750 to 1815 must be put down as on the whole an interlude of subsidence. Rationalism and Revolution swept Europe. The empires of Spain and Portugal, under whose patronage Roman Catholic Missions had won their greatest triumphs, collapsed with inevitable losses in prestige and power for the Christian enterprises associated with them. The Protestant Foreign Missionary Movement had hardly come to birth. "Again an old order was passing in connection with which Christianity had enjoyed a great expansion."

4. This retreat, however, was happily short-lived. In its train followed a period of such prodigious expansion and enlargement of influence that Dr. Latourette has made bold rightly to designate it "The Great Century." So wide-reaching and many-sided were the gains of the Christian Movement from 1815 to 1914 that the historian finds it necessary to grant this century as much space as is required for the whole of the preceding eighteen. This is the epoch of Protestantism's great achievements. Because of its proximity to our own day and its contributions to our own background, it is the

period most familiar to us. Indeed so close is it that we tend to take it for granted, assuming it to be typical of the entire sweep of Christian history. Thus we overlook its exceptional character and its extraordinary achievements.

This century was the most fertile and the most fruitful in the long sequence. It was an era of great extension, planting the Christian Church in almost every country on the face of the earth. It was likewise an era of intensive permeation, bringing Christian ideals effectively to bear upon the diseases and disgraces of human society. From the Church and those inspired by its ideals, there issued during this century the greatest succession of movements for human relief and liberation in all history—for abolition of the slave trade, for prison reform, for abolition of slavery itself, for improved conditions of labor, for equality for women, for elimination of child labor, for temperance, for world peace. Meantime the Church was bearing its message of hope and its gifts of practical helpfulness to every continent and virtually every people.

Will any one challenge Professor Latourette's judgment in placing a terminus to that epoch, and in setting its date as 1914? Whether the decades since have inaugurated a major recession, how long the present period will endure, whether history's final judgment upon it will record gain or loss—these are questions about which we can speculate. We can now give no definite answers. But we should be blind leaders of the blind if we did not frankly face the meaning of the time in which we find ourselves. It is the epoch *after* the Great Century, the

period of greatest advance. It is an Age of Transition. Its upshot, no one dare forecast. A careful reading of the past in order that we may better discern its import and, as far as lies in our power, more worthily direct the sweep of its turbulent tides—this is a first charge upon the leadership of the Christian Church in our day.

*iv*

Here, then, is the main teaching of the history. Over nineteen centuries the Christian Movement has spread to an ever wider circumference and permeated with ever deeper imprint the life of mankind.<sup>4</sup> But its progress has been through a sequence of periodic advances and retreats. Today we appear to be standing close to the beginning of one of the phases of regression.

However, there are secondary conclusions discoverable from such an historical survey, hardly less striking and with even more immediate direction for our thought. Let us note four.

1. Although the centuries clearly portray an alternation of flow and ebb, these have not been uniform and regular. It is no cyclic movement with which we have to do. The figure of the tides, strictly followed, disguises the deeper fact. In Dr. Latourette's phrase: "To date, each ebb has been less pronounced than the preceding one, and has been followed by an advance which has carried

<sup>4</sup> Professor Latourette himself employs four criteria to test advance or retreat: (1) geographic extension, (2) birth of new religious movements within the Church, (3) effect of Christianity upon various phases of culture, (4) influence upon individuals. Cf. *Anno Domini*, p. 206.

the faith forward to a new high-water mark in its effect upon mankind as a whole."

This is most obviously the case as regards geographic extension. In a period of retreat, Christianity has never lost all of the territory penetrated during the preceding expansion. The next advance has always pushed farther than its predecessor.

In the matter of influence upon culture, this is also clearly true in a comparison of the first and second epochs. In the Middle Ages, Christianity held a far stronger grip upon the whole life of men in the regions of the world where it was dominant than it had at the heyday of its influence upon the Graeco-Roman world. Dr. Latourette believes this is no less true of the later periods. He discovers Christianity a more pervasive factor in the Europe of 1750 than in the Europe of 1350. And he further contends that the mind of Jesus had made a deeper imprint upon the consciousness and consciences of all mankind in 1914 than at any earlier date.

2. The sweep of Christianity in periods of march has been due not to one factor, but to the coalescence of several factors. Some of these are within the Christian Movement. Some are external to it and even uncongenial to its deepest nature. This, likewise, is a generalization verified in every era of strength. In each, four main factors appear to have furthered the Church's success. Three of them lie within the culture of Christianity, one within the foreign culture which it aims to penetrate. Only one of the four factors, though the most important, springs from Christianity itself.

(a) An undeniable adjunct of Christian extension in each of its four most creative periods has been *political conquest or penetration*, what is today designated by the ill-odored word "Imperialism." This is not to say, as is often done by critics of Christian Missions, that the Church has been the ally, even the tool, of secular political powers. Often they have despised the Church and would gladly have been rid of its disturbing challenge to their consciences and their designs. But almost always political penetration has in some measure prepared a setting for the Church's evangelistic work. In the Roman period, the advance of the Empire's legions among the barbarian tribes to the North and over the decadent empires of the East opened doors for Christian missionaries; it is a noteworthy fact that the birth of the Christian Movement coincided with the reign of the first Roman Emperor. The relationship was especially evident in the advance of Catholic Missions among the territories of Spanish and Portuguese conquest in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Again in the nineteenth century, political penetration by western so-called Christian nations brought some new lands within the reach of the Church. Even the employment of armed force has had its undeniable influence upon the fortunes of the Christian Movement, both in prying openings for expansion and also in shielding the Church against hostile attack in times of relapse. So convinced a Christian pacifist as Professor Latourette is driven to recognize: "We must remember that more than once, force saved Christianity from grave territorial losses. However incompatible the spirit of Jesus and armed force may be, and

however unpleasant it may be to acknowledge the fact, as a matter of plain history the latter has often made it possible for the former to survive."

(b) Christian advance has also been intimately related to *exploration and discovery*, to the penetration of *commerce and trade*. Here, even less than in the case of political conquest, has the relationship been one of direct alliance. Very occasionally, explorers and traders have welcomed the advent of missionaries. More characteristically, the latter have been viewed as impediments to untrammelled exploitation of economic opportunities, tolerated when they have not been definitely opposed. The services of business to Missions have been, as with political imperialism, less intentional than fortuitous. Explorers and traders have prospected new lands, established contacts, founded settlements, seized natural resources and sometimes human persons, and exploited all to their own maximum advantage. Representatives of the Christian Churches have followed to bring the higher and more welcome gifts of civilization—education, medicine, social services, enlightened and spiritual faith.

This question of the relation of Christian Missions to political and economic penetration is so much mooted today that it warrants careful examination in the perspective of the most recent epoch.

Here history shows no simple or uniform pattern. Nevertheless the overwhelming weight of its evidence is inescapable. During the past century Western influence has penetrated the East through three sharply distin-

guished and often contrasted channels. Western influence is personified in the East today by representatives of three sharply distinguished and often opposed agencies—those of government, of business, and of missions.

Not infrequently the chronological sequence in the advent of these three influences has been the reverse of that just given. Not until the history is carefully examined is one likely to realize how often Christian missionaries were the first representatives of Western nations to come among primitive or non-Christian peoples. They came, characteristically, with their Bible, their books, their printing-press, their medical kit, their faith, and a firm resolve to give themselves wholly and until death to the people among whom they settled. They came without dependence upon the comforts of Western civilization or the protection of Western government.

Only later were they followed by representatives of Western enterprise—first, itinerant traders stopping for brief stays to bargain with native peoples for their treasures or to seize their persons, and bearing these away to the huge profits of Western markets; then, merchants establishing semi-permanent centers of exchange; finally, in more recent times, Big Business taking control of the natural resources and arteries of trade for wholesale exploitation. Lastly came Western government, sometimes at the behest of traders and merchants for the support of their commercial interests, but not infrequently in response to earnest persuasion by the missionaries in defense of the native peoples. Often the intervention of Western government was the only possible protection for

these peoples against ruthless despoilment and sometimes annihilation at the hands of Western business.

One hears much of Missions as the vanguard and ally of Western imperialism and finance. History shows missionaries and merchants more typically at loggerheads, contending for the support of government in behalf of their respective interests in the native peoples—on the one hand, their education and cultural advance; on the other hand, their exploitation and cultural subservience.

Generalization on so complex a development over so vast a territory would need many qualifications. But one cannot escape the impression that the influence of Missions has been, by and large, overwhelmingly for the solid good of the peoples of the East; that the influence of Western government has been ambiguous with the balance possibly falling towards a favorable account; but that the influence of business, with due allowance made for the material advance which has been its accompaniment, has on the whole been detrimental.

In the East today, one meets three types of foreigners—business agents, government representatives and Christian missionaries. Upon the people with whom they come in contact they make widely different impressions. In Shanghai, shortly before Pearl Harbor, a representative of an American oil concern and an American missionary, friends who had been associated for many years in a dozen civic enterprises, were discussing the Far Eastern struggle. The missionary inquired, "How do you reconcile the fact that you have spent your whole life making friends with the Chinese people and seeking to establish

the finest business relations with them with the fact that you are now working your head off to sell oil to the Japanese military to be used to fuel Japanese planes in the bombing of China's women and children?" To which the business man replied sadly, "You know the answer. We'd sell to the Devil himself if he paid cash."<sup>5</sup>

(c) The reception of the Christian Message is almost always preceded and prepared for by deepening *dissatisfaction with their own culture and faith* on the part of those to whom it comes. There is no better illustration of this fact than the story of the first beginnings. It was to a world fevered with spiritual unrest and longing, teeming with crude and unsatisfying cults and superstitions that the earliest Christians brought their Gospel of truth and power and fellowship. Here, rather than in the sophistication of Graeco-Roman culture, is to be discovered the significant *preparatio evangelica*. This has been true in the centuries since. The triumphs of Christianity have not been solely or mainly through conquest over strong competitors or through forced superimposition upon unreceptive and unwilling hearers. Rather Christian Faith has come as spiritual riches filling a vacuum, as spiritual medicine healing putrid sores, as spiritual power succoring profound spiritual longing.

(d) However, the decisive and one indispensable factor in Christianity's successive advances, in such widely separated ages and such diverse circumstances, has been—the Christian Church. And the tireless, faith-filled,

<sup>5</sup> For a fuller discussion see *For the Healing of the Nations*, pp. 159-167, from which the paragraphs just above are taken.

self-giving zeal and service of its evangelists, the Christian missionaries. Always, they have carried three instruments for their work: the Scriptures, humanitarian concern and services, above all the story and power of Jesus Christ.

3. The impact of the Christian Movement has always registered both upon the lives of individuals for their reclamation and upon the structures of societies for their transformation. It has worked about equally in each sphere. History knows nothing of contrast or antithesis between a "personal" and a "social" Gospel. Professor Latourette, detailing this twofold influence and more particularly quoting Paul's definition of the "fruits of the Spirit," continues:

"For untold millions Jesus has meant at least a beginning of these fruits. In some the change has begun suddenly. Drunkards and drug addicts have found power abruptly to break with their chronic weakness, and to break completely and finally. Some have torn a long-cherished hate from their hearts. Others have restored stolen property or have done all in their power to make amends for past wrongs. In others the changes have come more slowly, by a gradual development from childhood to old age. Even those who have made a sudden break have not become perfect at a bound. As they have fulfilled the conditions, they have borne more and more the characteristic fruit. Amid all the diversity of creeds, of ecclesiastical organizations, and of forms of worship through which Christians have expressed and nourished their faith, and above all the divisions which have rent the followers of Christ into separate and often quarrelling

churches, there is a common and characteristic likeness among those who have begun to enter the Christian experience. The 'fruits of the Spirit' are the same and are to be found in individuals in all of the diverse bodies which bear the Christian name. Millions have believed in God as seen in Jesus, in his life, his death, and his resurrection. To them God has been the Father of their Lord, Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus they have loved God and trusted Him. Through Jesus has come to millions a vision of an eternal life of moral and spiritual transformation with the love and adoration of God as at once its means and its goal.

"In the collective life of mankind the effects of Jesus have also been characteristic. He has increased reverence for human personality. Those who are believed to be potentially children of God with eternal life before them are not to be despised, but are to be treated with reverence. Jesus has made for self-respect, for fearlessness in a mysterious universe, for education, for intellectual confidence and daring. In his train have come care for the poor and the sick and great movements to combat disease and famine. Remembering that Jesus declared that those who lose their lives save them, that those who would follow him must forsake all, and that he himself came not to be ministered unto but to minister, thousands of Christians have believed that if they are to deserve that name they must give themselves fully in the kind of service which Jesus rendered to his fellows. In the name of Jesus and that the hungry might be fed, they have cleared forests, drained swamps, and introduced new fruits and better methods of agriculture. They have built thousands of hospitals and schools. They have fought war and have endeavored to find ways of establishing peace. They have combated slavery, prostitution, and entrenched greed. Some have found the strength

to struggle against political corruption. Thousands have been given the purpose and the courage to seek to devise economic measures and forms of government which would make possible the worthy development of individuals whose goal is fellowship with the eternal God. Some have gone to the loathsome slums of great cities to bring light and hope to the unhappy denizens. Some have struggled to eliminate the slums. Some have laboured for greater privileges for women and children. Some have taught the blind to read. Others have sought to cure blindness. Some have been moved to express the Christian vision in great music and to put the drama of human salvation into poetry, painting, and architecture. Many of the finest examples of the aesthetic spirit have arisen out of the impulse given by Jesus. Numbers of the greatest attempts of the human intellect to understand the universe and to present in orderly fashion what man can know of his environment have been inspired by the confidence that the Creator and Sustainer of the universe is the God and Father of Jesus and that in Jesus is the key to the meaning of human life and human history.”<sup>6</sup>

4. There remains history’s most unexpected and in many ways most instructive lesson.

In eras of retreat, loss has often been most acute precisely in those areas where Christianity had seemed rooted in greatest depth and strength, where it was most thoroughly enmeshed within the surrounding culture. As that culture has disintegrated, the Church, its spiritual partner, has suffered gravely. For example in the first and severest recession, it was not at the fountain-sources of the Movement in Palestine and Asia Minor, or where

<sup>6</sup> *Anno Domini*, Harpers, pp. 220-222.

Christian faith had most fully come to terms with Graeco-Roman culture and worked out a partnership with it in Egypt and North Africa, that the Church proved strong to survive the cataclysm. On the contrary, just here where Christianity might have been expected to be impregnable and ineffaceable, it was in fact overwhelmed and virtually disappeared. It was on the frontiers of culture and the Church, in Gaul and Western Europe, that Christianity continued robust. And it was from these unpromising outposts that the vital impulses for recovery mainly came.

Thus is indicated the even more usual and more significant obverse of this generalization. In times when the Christian Movement is rallying from loss and launching forth on fresh advance, new power is likely to arise, not from the old centers of strength, but precisely from the areas where Christianity had been young when weakness set in, where its very youth and consequent vitality have enabled its vigorous survival through disintegration, persecution or defeat, and where its relative disengagement from a dying culture has nurtured independence, experiment and creative life. After the first recession, forward movement sprang not from Antioch or Alexandria or Byzantium but from Gaul and the borders of civilization. After the second recession, forward movement was resumed not from Rome but from Spain and Portugal and Germany. After the third recession, forward movement was empowered not from Central Europe or Iberia, but from Britain and America. The teaching of this arresting fact for our times is obvious. If ours be the

beginning of the fourth recession, where shall we most hopefully expect the impulses of vitality for the next advance?

*v*

So much for the instruction of history. In conclusion, what of our situation, and the outlook for Christianity in the days immediately ahead? What light is cast into those obscure prospects from the hard-won illumination of the past?

The services of such a historical review are mainly two. In the first place, it should bring reassurance in days of darkness. The knowledge that this vast complex Movement to which our allegiance is given has survived graver threats than we are likely to be called to weather, and each time has emerged from their perils to even greater achievements and expanded services, should steady indecision and steel faltering resolve. Not improbably we may be entering dark days when courage and faith do well to be buttressed by such encouragements.

If the astounding sequence of flow and ebb, now four times re-enacted in nineteen centuries, may be taken as prophetic of the future, here is solid ground of hope for those fated, it may be, to live out their lives and do their work in one of mankind's eras of darkness and decline. Not only does it promise the certainty that, even though our epoch should experience a fourth major retreat, it will pass and will give way for the fifth great advance. It also offers the probability that this regression, how-

ever sharp and disheartening, may be briefer and less tragic than any of its forerunners. And it encourages the assurance that the forward movement, when again resumed, will carry the name and power of Christ farther and deeper than at any earlier time. One of the most searching questions which every responsible leader of the Christian Movement should ask himself is this: Are there factors in the present so-called recession which, as is sometimes claimed, strike so radically at the roots of Christian faith and life as to alter the fundamental logic of Christian advance, established now through two millennia of recurrent flow and ebb and stronger flow?

Secondly, these findings should offer definite suggestions for policy and program. Drawn from the crucible of the past, they warn of what has crumbled and failed under earlier severe testings; they advise what methods and resources by their proven power to survive and serve we would do well to place reliance upon in our day.

One suggestion, though it is only a possibility, stands forth with peculiar challenge to thought. If it should prove that the Christian Movement *is* entering one of its periodic retreats; and if, in earlier parallel phases, the resumption of advance which has unfailingly followed has usually issued not from previous centers of strength but from areas where the Church had been recently planted and where it was strong to withstand the shock of adversity, numerically unimpressive but vigorous in the resilience of youth; and if the habits of history are to repeat their now well-worn pattern—*then* we know where we may well look for the energies of reinvigoration

and recovery. We may look to the life of the Youngest Christian Churches, planted within the past century by Christian Missions, for the revival and redemption of Christ's Movement on earth. Then the importance of the Madras Conference where those Youngest Churches first clearly came of age will stand forth with new meaning.<sup>7</sup> Then, in the perspective of later ages, it may be discerned that in our time the Providence of God has once again been forming and preparing a new instrument for his most important work in behalf of humanity in the Age yet unborn.

Two other conclusions—the most important of all—stand forth upon the face of the record. Together they embody most of what we need to know of the genius of this amazing reality within mankind's life, much the most extraordinary reality which history knows—the Christian Movement in the world. One concerns content, the other concerns method.

What is the principal secret of Christianity's power in the world—of its continuity, of its authority, of its endurance and vitality, of its unique capacities for endless self-renewal? It is its possession of Jesus Christ, of the story of his life among men, of the dynamic of his ever-living Presence. All through the nineteen centuries, the portrait of Christ embedded in the Gospels has worked its ever-repeated alchemy—exposing absurdities, restraining excesses, sifting truth from fancy and reality from magic, purifying crude and false notions, rectifying sincere but misguided misinterpretations of himself, stirring

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *For the Healing of the Nations*, pp. 121-122, 179-188.

imagination, quickening faith, chastening infidelity, winning a devotion ever more intelligent and unalterable. Through those imperfect records, Jesus ever afresh lays constraint upon his Movement in the world, holding it more or less true to his mind and faith, and impelling it to new advances for fulfillment of his purposes. This is the most important single fact about the Christian religion.

What is the method by which this Movement has secured preservation when every other institution crumbled, has extended its influence to the ends of the earth, has been reborn afresh in each new age from the ashes of a dying epoch? None of these things has been accomplished of direct purpose.

Christianity did not set out to conquer the Roman Empire, though it did in fact do so.

Christianity did not set out to salvage the values of Graeco-Roman civilization, though it did in fact do so.

Christianity did not set out to make itself the core, the energizing center, of mankind's greatest organic culture, though in fact it became that.

Christianity did not set out to become a world-embracing Society, a World Community, though it has in fact become that.

Christianity did not set out to create an organism and a structure which should alone hold the peoples of the earth together, though that is what it is today.

How, then, did these things come to pass? The answer is given in the Archbishop of Canterbury's enthronement sermon to which we referred earlier:

"No human agency has planned this. It is the result of the great missionary enterprise of the last hundred and fifty years. Neither the missionaries nor those who sent them out were aiming at the creation of a world-wide fellowship, interpenetrating the nations, bridging the gulfs between them, and supplying the promise of a check to their rivalries. The aim for nearly the whole period was to *preach the Gospel to as many individuals as could be reached*<sup>8</sup> so that those who were won to discipleship should be put in the way of eternal salvation. Almost incidentally, the great world-fellowship has arisen from that enterprise. But it has arisen; it is the great new fact of our time. . . .

"Out of the great missionary movement with its proclamation of the Gospel of the love of God and its call for self-surrender as our response to that Gospel, is arising on a scale never before seen in the world the Christian fellowship which corresponds to St. Paul's description [of the Church as the fellowship in which all earthly divisions are abolished]. It is of urgent importance that we become aware of it, that we further it in every way open to us, and that through it we take our part in providing for the Spirit of Christ the agency by which He may transform the world."

vi

We began with Sir Edward Grey's famous prophecy, "The lights are going out all over Europe tonight. We shall hardly see them rekindled in our lifetime."

In these days, we have learned to think of an even deeper darkness. We speak of "blackout"—blackouts of towns and cities, but also blackouts of education, of truth, of justice, of fellowship.

<sup>8</sup> Italics mine.

But, when we pause to think, we know that the "black-out" is never wholly complete. Only to the external view does it appear so. Behind the blinds which convey to the outside world a semblance of utter darkness, lights are still burning—shaded, guarded, perhaps kept secretly aflame, sometimes only tiny flickers.

So it is with our world's life in this hour. To the external eye, to the superficial view, almost total blackout. To keener discernment, behind the darkness lights still burn—sometimes mere flickers, sometimes gravely menaced, sometimes only secretly, sometimes with fierce though hidden flame. From those candles and lamps, scattered here and there and there across the face of this war-stricken and war-darkened world, shall come the flames which shall yet rekindle the lights of humanity—flames kept alight from him Who is the Light of the World. They shall give their illumination until that day comes in which "there shall be no night, nor need of candle, nor light of the sun; for the Lord God shall give light."

*Our task, yours and mine, is to keep those lights burning.*

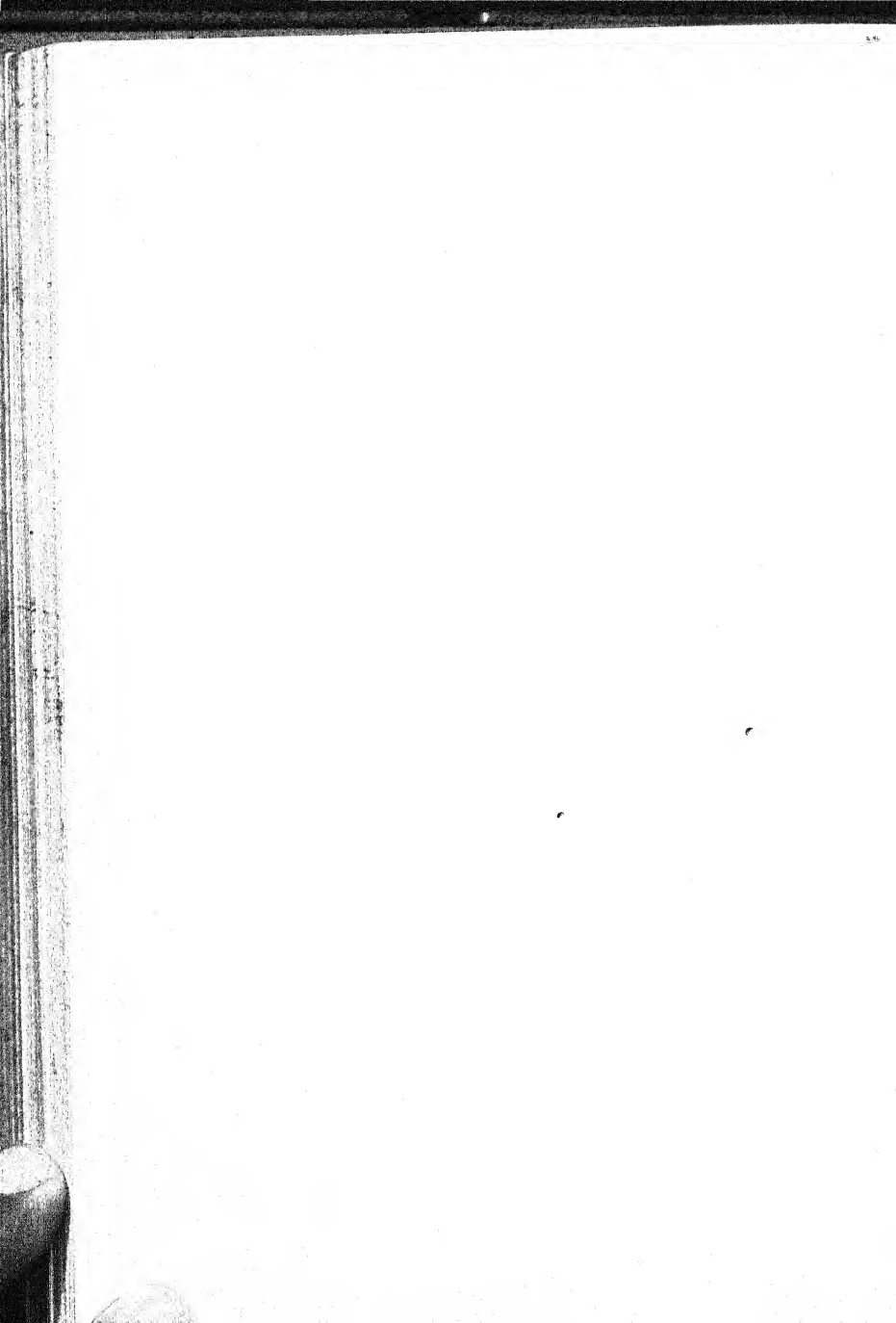


*The Outlook  
for Church Union*

*Church Union  
in South India*

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# *The Outlook*

## *for Church Union*

IT HAS LONG BEEN RECOGNIZED THAT the differences which divide Christians are of three general types. We may distinguish them as *convictional*, *cultural*, and *temperamental*.

*Convictional differences* involve the basic faith of Christians—beliefs about God, the World, man, Christ, the Church, the future. In brief, theological differences.

*Cultural differences* spring on the one hand from divergent *historic* traditions, sometimes of long development; or on the other hand, from contrasted *social* outlooks and loyalties within a single historic culture. An illustration of the first kind would be the various Lutheran divisions within the United States, perpetuating historic differences of European nationalities and languages—Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish Lutherans. An instance of the second type is the contrast between Anglicans and Methodists, so largely cultural rather than theological in character.

Behind these two great types of differentiation lies a third, somewhat vaguer but even more pervasive and universal, which for want of a better name we have called *temperamental*. It is the difference between those on the one hand whose outlook is permeated by the recognition that human nature and the great issues of human

thought change little from age to age, that no "new" discovery is likely to be either wholly new or fully true, and who are therefore predisposed to trust the tried and proven wisdom of the past; and on the other hand, those who are fired by the dynamic character of the universe and life, by man's progressive achievements, and who are therefore predisposed to discard the old and fasten expectant attention upon the latest. In brief, the contrast between the *traditionalist* and the *modernist* tempers.

Now the first observation to be made upon the problem of Church union is this. While it is widely assumed that only differences of essential belief hold Christians apart, actually differences which are cultural or temperamental in character are often far deeper and more divisive. And these are found *within* almost every main instance of convictional differentiation. Peoples of many nations and of diverse cultures, the privileged and the poor, traditionalists and modernists—all dwell together within most of the great Christian Communions. Yet members of these Communions would confess that their most natural affinities, even of a spiritual kind, cross denominational barriers. A Broad Church Episcopalian finds himself more at home among liberal Presbyterians of the same cultural outlook than among "spikey" Anglo-Catholics or fellow-Episcopalians of a different social stratum. A "fundamentalist" Baptist is far closer to "fundamentalist" Methodists than to fellow-Baptists who have drunk deep of Modernist Humanism. Everywhere in the world, Protestants of any Communion will be found gravitating to a church of their own nationality and language, whatever its denomination, rather than to a church

of their own Communion which worships in unfamiliar speech. These facts cast a revealing searchlight upon the actualities of Christian division and upon the unrealities of most denominational demarcations.

ii

In the crucial matter of the bearing of *convictional* or creedal differences upon Christian reunion, the present position was clearly revealed in the Edinburgh Conference of 1937.

Here, again, clear thought is furthered by noting that the convictions which Christians hold and which are often regarded as matters of essential faith fall into three main classes. First, those which concern their *basic theological beliefs* about God, the World, man, Christ, the future. Second, those which concern *a Church's view of itself*—its authority, its worship, its polity, its ministry. Third, those which concern the Christian's practical life in the world, both personal and corporate. In brief, these three differentiations pertain respectively to *faith, order and ethics*. (Note the parallel to *Faith and Order, Life and Work*.)

Now, once more, we quickly discern that it is in the first and third of these areas—*faith* and *ethics*—that the deepest and most difficult cleavages are felt to lie.

It is undeniable that the chasms which separate Christians on the meaning of their faith for practical life, especially matters of social ethics, for example the Christian attitude towards war, are well-nigh unbridgeable. Nevertheless, these differences have never been regarded as insuperable obstacles to Church unity. They are nowhere

so regarded today. Pacifists and non-pacifists, capitalists and socialists are found within most major denominations.

One of the most notable gains of the Edinburgh Conference was the securing of official recognition by all participant Churches that differences in the first area—what Christians hold true in all the vital matters of God, Christ, human destiny—are no longer insurmountable obstacles to Christian reunion. As far back as the Lausanne Conference of 1927, a comprehensive statement of basic Christian belief had been given forth as the mind of the entire body. This same statement, somewhat amplified, had been reaffirmed at the Jerusalem Missionary Conference the following year. At Edinburgh in 1937, all questions in this basic area of theological belief were brought together under the single caption, "The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," and entrusted to a single Section, building on thorough preparatory work extending over the preceding decade. That Section prefaced its Report—and the statement was subsequently adopted without dissent by the entire Conference—with this declaration:

"With deep thankfulness to God for the spirit of unity, which by His gracious blessing upon us has guided and controlled all our discussions on this subject, we agree on the following statement and recognize that there is in connection with this subject no ground for maintaining division between Churches."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Second World Conference on Faith and Order, Edinburgh, 1937*, Macmillan, p. 224.

In other words, the disagreements which official spokesmen of the Churches themselves regard as serious obstacles to Christian unity lie wholly in the second realm, that of *Church order*. They do not involve Christians' beliefs regarding the nature of reality and the content of their Gospel. Or the Christian message for the life of individuals and communities. They concern only the claims which Churches make regarding themselves—their true nature, their authorization from God, their proper organization and ministry, their forms of worship. Or, more accurately, where these matters are regarded as of essential faith. As the Edinburgh Report points out:

"We find that the obstacles most difficult to overcome consist of elements of 'faith' and 'order' combined, as when some form of Church government or worship is considered a part of the faith."<sup>2</sup>

iii

Even more careful analysis discloses that cleavages in this limited area—the *Doctrine of the Church*—fall into five groups. These, in turn, break into no less than sixteen specific issues on which there are differences of view among certain Churches which some of them regard as important. But in only *one* of the sixteen did the delegates of the Churches at Edinburgh discover variances which must at present be regarded as insuperable.

What, it may be asked, is this matter on which alone, within the whole vast range of Christian belief, diver-

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 257.

gences are so vital that Churchmen cannot contemplate the reunion of Christ's Body until agreement shall have been reached? The crucial dispute concerns—the nature and authority of the Christian Ministry! More particularly, the question of Apostolic Succession.

This does not imply that any Church denies or ignores Apostolic Succession. On the contrary, as Edinburgh pointed out, "In every case, Churches treasure the Apostolic Succession in which they believe." But they differ among themselves as to whether the fact of Apostolic Succession which all recognize and revere is to be located in:

(a) "The succession of bishops in the principal sees of Christendom, handing down and preserving the Apostles' doctrine, and a succession by laying-on of hands" (Episcopal).

(b) "The inseparability of Church and ministry and the continuity of both" (Old Catholic and Orthodox).

(c) "A succession of ordination by presbyteries duly constituted and exercising episcopal functions, and the succession of presbyters in charge of parishes, with special emphasis on the true preaching of the Word and the right administration of the Sacraments" (Presbyterian and Reformed).

(d) "The maintenance of the Apostles' witness through the true preaching of the Gospel, the right administration of the Sacraments, and the perpetuation of the Christian life in the Christian community" (other Communions).

There is also some contrast as to the *importance* of Apostolic Succession.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 245-248.

When one recalls that the overwhelming majority of the Churches' spokesmen at any ecclesiastical gathering or on any theological commission are clergy, this crucial divergence stands forth with peculiar, and perhaps humiliating, starkness. Is there any significance in the fact that if the whole content of Christian conviction were represented on a scale along a line, the only segment of that line which would contain insuperable obstacles to Christian reunion would lie at the extreme last end, indeed at a tiny point in a small part of the least fundamental and significant area of Christian belief; and that that minute point concerns what those who are charged with preserving or healing the divisions in Christ's Church—the ministry—believe about themselves?

Even here, at this most crucial and intractable point of division, the Churches are not without unanimous, or nearly unanimous, direction as to the most promising course towards surmounting the difficulty regarding the Ministry and Apostolic Succession.

As far back as Lausanne, this formula was agreed upon: <sup>4</sup>

"In view of (1) the place which the Episcopate, the Councils of Presbyters, and the Congregation of the faithful, respectively had in the constitution of the early Church, and (2) the fact that episcopal, presbyteral and congregational systems of government are each today, and have been for centuries, accepted by great communions in Christendom, and (3) the fact that episco-

<sup>4</sup> *Faith and Order, Lausanne, 1927*, Doubleday Doran 1928, p. 379.

pal, presbyteral and congregational systems are each believed by many to be essential to the good order of the Church, we therefore recognize that these several elements must all, under conditions which require further study, have an appropriate place in the order of life of a reunited Church, and that each separate communion, recalling the abundant blessing of God vouchsafed to its ministry in the past, should gladly bring to the common life of the united Church its own spiritual treasures."

This guiding principle—a principle of inclusion rather than limitation—was again recommended in identical terms by the Edinburgh Conference.<sup>5</sup> It has been given concrete formulation in current proposals for the union of the Christian Churches in South India. That is one reason for the great importance of the South India Scheme.

*iv*

These, then, are the most important conclusions which may be drawn regarding theological or convictional obstacles to Church union:

(1) Differences which the Churches themselves recognize as serious barriers to their organic union occur in only one of the three principal realms of Christian conviction—in that concerned with the Church's view of itself. Within this one area of major difficulty, differences which are felt to be crucial occur at only one point—in the interpretation of the origin, ordination and authority of the Christian ministry.

(2) In the more fundamental matters of basic faith

<sup>5</sup> *The Second World Conference on Faith and Order, Edinburgh, 1937*, p. 248.

and the more elusive matters of ethics, while there are many divergences, they are not recognized as serious obstacles to unity. Indeed, in these areas, far greater divergences exist among those who recognize themselves as members of one Church than between themselves and members of other Christian Communions.

(3) Many Christians acknowledge that the most profound and vital cleavages are not along lines of convictional or theological differentiation at all, but rather those springing from cultural or temperamental contrasts. Sure proof of this is offered by the fact that the impulse towards closer affiliation and even union does not occur most frequently within the bounds of convictional affinity, between Churches of the same ecclesiastical family, but more prevailingly across these lines. For example, American Episcopalians seek reunion, not with Methodists, children of their own household separated from them by little more than a century, but with Presbyterians, a Church of one of the two other great families of Protestantism, their separation from whom dates from the Reformation.

(4) Actual Church union has been consummated or appears close to consummation embracing almost every principal theological difference, whether of faith or of polity and worship. In two corners of the world and under widely contrasted circumstances, Churches of the Anglican family are presently in promising negotiations towards full organic unions with communions of the Reformed or Presbyterian and Free Church or Congregational types—in South India and in the United States. Should either of these proposed unions achieve consummation, every principal Church of non-Roman Christendom would be, directly or indirectly, in relationships of full mutual recognition or of organic union with every other.

# *Church Union*

## *in South India*

WE HAVE STRESSED THE UNIQUE, IN many respects the crucial, importance of the present proposals for Church union in South India. It is hardly too much to say that, in this particular phase of the Movement of Consolidation—reunion—the whole Christian world is waiting breathlessly upon the final decision in South India. The advance of Christian reunion will be set forward or retarded immeasurably by the outcome. This is partly due to the fact that the projected Church of South India would embrace representative bodies from each of the three major Protestant families—Anglicans and Methodists, Presbyterian and Reformed, and Congregationalists. It is partly because the action proposed is a full and final organic union into one single Church of South India. It is partly because the South India Scheme faces squarely all the major difficulties confronting Christian reunion. It builds firmly upon the considered judgment of the Protestant and Orthodox worlds formulated in the sequence of ecumenical conferences. If successful, it would solve in principle, and provide precedent for all later solutions of, the crucial obstacles towards the ultimate reunion of non-Roman Christendom.

ii

We dare not take space to describe the South India plan in detail. It deserves the careful study of all Christians sincerely concerned for the unity of Christ's Church not alone because of its specific proposals but also because of the temper which animates it throughout. Something of both principle and spirit is suggested in these sentences from the Foreword: <sup>1</sup>

"It is sought to combine in the union three elements—the Episcopal, the Presbyterian and the Congregational; and it is believed that each of these elements has been embodied. Comprehension and not limitation has been the aim. All that has been found helpful in the uniting Churches has been included, and each Church will find its special contribution enriched by what the others contribute.

"Again, the united Church must be a true part of the Church universal, and will seek to be in fellowship with all the Churches in which Jesus is worshipped as Lord. It will therefore retain communion with the Churches to which the uniting Churches owe their origin, and at the same time will hope to work toward a still wider fellowship.

"The Scheme has been prepared in an atmosphere of prayer and of earnest seeking of the knowledge of the Divine will. From the beginning it has been recognized that union is a spiritual fact which finds its manifestation in an organic life. . . . Jesus Christ is the Person in whom the Churches unite. His life and death and ever-

<sup>1</sup> *Proposed Scheme of Church Union in South India*, The Christian Literature Society for India, 1942. Obtainable through the International Missionary Council, 156 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

living presence must be central in the thought, life and devotion of each member of the Church, as in that of the Church as a whole. His Cross is the place of meeting. The united Church will therefore desire to bring together all the different types of spiritual experience represented in the uniting Churches, and to keep together in the one Brotherhood those who emphasize the individual experience of the Christian heart, those who place the Cross in the center of their worship, investing with every solemnity of ritual the sacramental presentation of the great act of man's redemption, and those who bid the Church take full account of all new knowledge of the world which God's Spirit imparts to the human mind by channels other than those of organized religion.

"After union the Church will be a spiritual home for all those who have hitherto lived and worshipped in separation. There are differences of belief, of practice, of tradition, but all the members will bring into the united Church whatever of value they have learned in their separate organizations. Each of these elements will find its proper and effective place and be an enrichment of the life of the united Church. That Church will be a fellowship, and in that fellowship every member will find such a spiritual atmosphere that he can worship God with added devotion and serve men with enlarged powers and opportunities. And only by this union will there be released those mighty spiritual forces which will deepen the spiritual life of the members of the united Church and increase their power for the evangelization of India."

The same basic principle, the same purpose and the same hope are reiterated in similar phrases in the "Basis of Union," and again in the "Constitution of the Church of South India":

"The Church of South India believes that the unity of His Church for which Christ prayed is a unity in Him and in the Father through the Holy Spirit, and is therefore fundamentally a reality of the spiritual realm. It seeks the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. But this unity of the Spirit must find expression in the faith and order of the Church, in its worship, in its organization and in its whole life, so that as the Body of Christ, it may be a fit instrument for carrying out His gracious purpose in the world.

"Again, for the perfecting of the life of the whole body, the Church of South India needs the heritage of each of the uniting Churches, and each of those Churches will, it is hoped, not lose the continuity of its own life, but preserve that life enriched by the union with itself of the other two Churches. The Church of South India is thus formed by a combination of different elements each bringing its contribution to the whole, and not by the absorption of any one by any other. It is, therefore, a comprehensive Church; and its members, firmly holding the fundamentals of the faith and order of the Church Universal, are allowed wide freedom of opinion in all other matters, and wide freedom of action in such differences of practice as are consistent with the general framework of the Church as one organized body.

"The Church of South India acknowledges that in every effort to bring together divided members of Christ's Body into one organization, the final aim must be the union in the Universal Church of all who acknowledge the name of Christ, and that the test of all local schemes of union is that they should express locally the principle of the great catholic unity of the Body of Christ. The Church of South India desires, therefore, conserving all that is of spiritual value in its Indian heritage, to express under Indian conditions and in Indian forms

the spirit, the thought and the life of the Church Universal."

*iii*

Setting forth with these clear purposes and holding firmly to its guiding principle, the Church of South India approaches that issue which we have just discovered to be the crucial stumbling-block to Christian reunion—the question of the character and authority of the Ministry:

"It is the will of Christ that there should be a ministry accepted and fully effective throughout the world-wide Church. In the present divided state of Christendom there is no ministry which in this respect fully corresponds with the purpose of God, and the ministry can recover fulness only by the union of all parts of the one Body. The uniting Churches . . . acknowledge each other's ministries to be real ministries of the Word and Sacraments, and thankfully recognize the spiritual efficacy of sacraments and other ministrations which God has so clearly blessed. . . . Each Church, in separation, has borne special witness to certain elements of the truth; therefore for the perfecting of the whole body the heritage of each is needed. Each, maintaining the continuity of its own life, will be enriched by the gifts and graces of the others."

But how are the different types of Ministry to be reconciled within a single united Church? The answer is found in the recommendation of the Lausanne and Edinburgh Conferences:

"The Church of South India recognizes that episcopal, presbyteral and congregational elements must all have their place in its order of life, and that the episcopate,

the presbyterate, and the congregation of the faithful should all in their several spheres have responsibility and exercise authority in the life and work of the church, in its governance and administration, in its evangelistic and pastoral work, in its discipline, and its worship."

How are these principles to be given effect in actual organizational structure?

The basic unit in the structure of the Church of South India is the *Congregation*, consisting of all members of a local group of the faithful.

"Those are members according to the will and purpose of God who have been baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and receiving the calling and grace of God with faith, continue steadfast therein, maintaining by the same faith, through the various means of grace which He has provided by His Church, their vital union with the Head of the Body, and through Him their friendship one with another."

The next highest division is the *Diocese* embracing all congregations within a certain geographical area. Each Diocese is under the leadership of a bishop. But the administration of the Diocese is entrusted to a Diocesan Council consisting of the bishop, the assistant bishop (if any), all presbyters in charge of pastorates, and lay representatives at least equal in number to the pastorates in the Diocese and not greater than twice that number.

"The supreme governing and legislative body of the Church of South India, and the final authority in all matters pertaining to the Church is to be the *Synod*

composed of all bishops and not fewer than two presbyters and four laymen from each Diocese with additional representatives according to numbers of baptized members." The officers of the Synod are to be a Moderator, a Deputy Moderator, a General Secretary and a Treasurer, elected by the Synod at its biennial meeting. The Moderator and Deputy Moderator are to be chosen from among the bishops.

Presbyters (ministers) are to be ordained by the laying on of hands by the bishop of the Diocese and by presbyters according to rules established by the Diocesan Council, but always on recommendation of or after consultation with the congregation to which the candidate belongs, and also after acceptance of the candidate both by the bishop and by the Diocesan Council or a diocesan body appointed for the purpose.

Nominations for the election of a diocesan bishop shall be made by both the Diocesan Council and the Executive Committee of the Synod. From these nominations, the Diocesan Council shall select not fewer than two or more than four persons. A Board consisting of the Moderator of the Synod and six members appointed by the Executive Committee of the Synod shall then choose the bishop, subject to confirmation by the Executive Committee of the Synod. He shall be consecrated by the laying-on of hands of at least three bishops and three presbyters.

As already indicated, all officers of the Synod are elected biennially by it.

From this skeleton outline of the organization, it is apparent how successfully the Church of South India has assured that "episcopal, presbyteral and congregational elements shall have their place in the life and work of the Church."

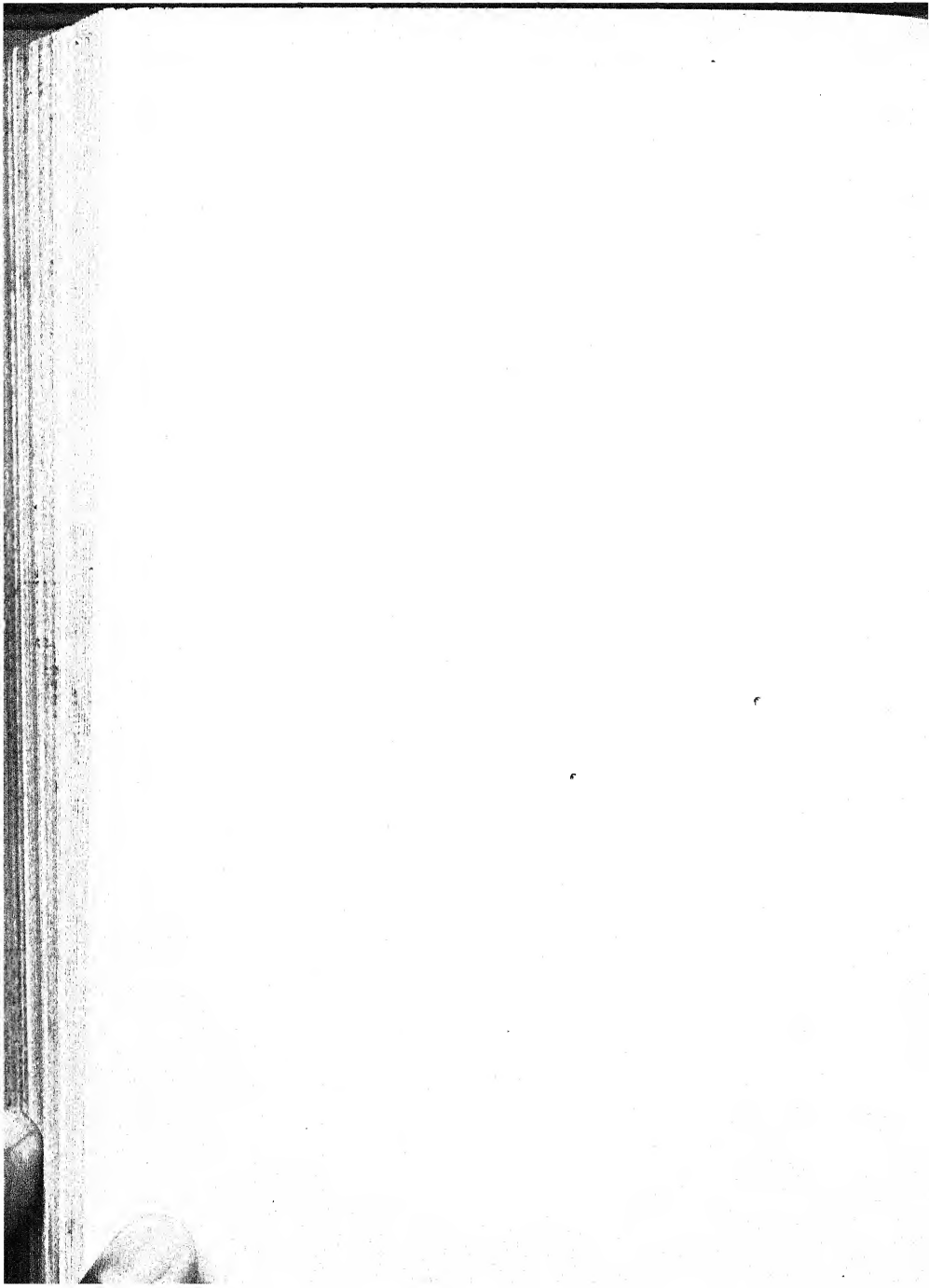
*iv*

What, it may be asked, is the likelihood that this proposed Church will actually come into being? Of the three Church bodies which intend to unite to form the new Church of Christ in South India, one has given definitive adherence through the affirmative action of a large majority of its Synods. The two others had already voted preliminary acceptance. Their reaffirmation of approval will assure consummation of the union. Final decision is expected before the spring of 1944.



# *Appendix*





MEMBERSHIP OF  
THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

*[As of January 1, 1943]*

AUSTRALIA

Church of England in Australia  
Presbyterian Church of Australia  
Federal Conference of Churches of Christ in Australia

BELGIUM

Église Chrétienne Missionnaire Belge

BRAZIL

Methodist Church of Brazil

CANADA

Church of England in Canada  
Presbyterian Church in Canada  
United Church of Canada

CHINA

Church of Christ in China

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Evangelical Church of Bohemian Brethren  
(Ceskobratska Cirkev Evangelicka)

ENGLAND

Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland  
Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland  
(Disciples)  
Church of England  
Congregational Union of England and Wales  
Methodist Church  
Presbyterian Church of England

**ESTHONIA**

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Esthonia  
(Esti Evangeeliumi Luteriusu Kiriku)  
Orthodox Church in Esthonia

**FINLAND**

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland  
(Suomen Evankelis-Luterilainen Kirkko)

**FRANCE**

Église Réformée de France  
Église Réformée d'Alsace et de Lorraine

**HOLLAND**

Algemeene Doopsgezinde Societeit  
Evangelisch-Luthersche Kerk  
Nederlandsche Hervormde Kerk  
Old Catholic Church of Holland  
Remonstrantsche Broederschap

**HUNGARY**

Reformed Church of Hungary

**INDIA**

Church of India, Burma and Ceylon  
Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India  
Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar  
South India United Church

**IRELAND**

Methodist Church in Ireland

**LATVIA**

Orthodox Church in Latvia

**LITHUANIA**

Reformed Church of Lithuania  
(Lietuvos Ev.-Reformatu Baznycia)

**MEXICO**

Methodist Church of Mexico

**NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES**

Protestant Church of the Netherlands East Indies

**NEW ZEALAND**

Anglican Church of the Province of New Zealand

Presbyterian Church of New Zealand

**PHILIPPINE ISLANDS**

United Evangelical Church of the Philippines

**POLAND**

Evangelical Church of the Augsburgian Confession

(Evangelisch-Augsburgische Kirche in Polen)

Polish National Catholic Church

United Evangelical Church

(Unierte Evangelische Kirche)

**SCOTLAND**

Church of Scotland

Congregational Union in Scotland

Episcopal Church in Scotland

**SOUTH AFRICA**

Congregational Union of South Africa

**SWEDEN**

Church of Sweden (Svenska Kirka)

**SWITZERLAND**

Old Catholic Church of Switzerland

Swiss Protestant Church Federation

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

National Baptist Convention

Northern Baptist Convention, U. S. A.

Seventh Day Baptist Churches

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** (*continued*)

Church of the Brethren  
United Brethren in Christ  
Congregational Christian Churches  
International Convention of Disciples of Christ  
Protestant Episcopal Church  
Evangelical Church  
The Religious Society of Friends  
    Five Years Meeting  
    General Conference  
    Philadelphia Yearly Meeting  
Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America  
United Lutheran Church in America  
Methodist Church  
African Methodist Episcopal Church  
Moravian Church (Northern Province)  
Polish National Catholic Church of America  
Rumanian Orthodox Episcopate in America  
Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Church, Archdiocese of  
    New York and all North America  
Presbyterian Church in the United States of America  
Presbyterian Church in the United States  
United Presbyterian Church of North America  
Evangelical and Reformed Church  
Reformed Church in America

**WEST INDIES**

Anglican Church of the West Indies

**YUGOSLAVIA**

Old Catholic Church of Yugoslavia

**THE SALVATION ARMY**

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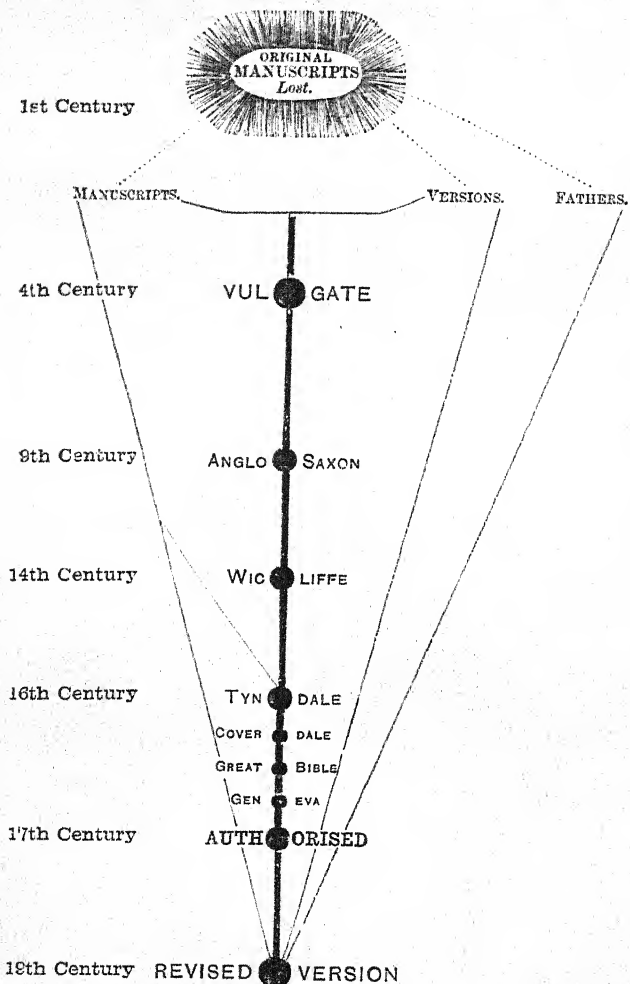
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# DIAGRAM SHOWING HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE.



(1) Contents of Original Manuscripts (now lost) survive in the existing MANUSCRIPTS, VERSIONS, and FATHERS. (See p. 16).

(2) The Latin Vulgate (a revision of the Old Latin *Versions* by comparison with Greek and Hebrew *Manuscripts*) is the source of our English *Versions* down to Tyndale. He first draws from *manuscript* sources but of modern date.

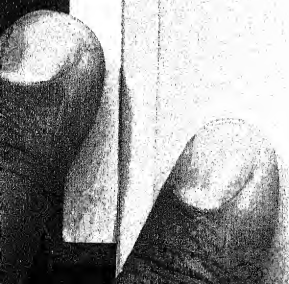
(3) The three sources — MANUSCRIPTS, VERSIONS, and FATHERS — are all combined for the first time in the recent Revision.

*Photograph of ANCIENT GREEK Manuscripts:—*

1. Scrap of a famous Greek Manuscript of Genesis. (*Codex Genesios.*)
2. Portions of its writing, full size.
3. Fac-simile of the Alexandrian Codex in the British Museum (see p. 27).
4. A portion of a 9th Century Manuscript.
5. Beginning of 29th Psalm on Papyrus in the British Museum.



*Facing Diagram.]*



# How we got our Bible:

AN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS SUGGESTED  
BY THE LATE REVISION.

BY

J. PATERSON SMYTH, LL.B., B.D.,

SENIOR MODERATOR, &c., T.C.D.,

RECTOR OF CHRIST CHURCH, KINGSTOWN.

NEW EDITION.

WITH ADDITIONAL ILLUSTRATIONS.



Multæ terricolis linguæ, cœlestibus una.

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## PREFACE.

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IN grateful acknowledgement of the favour with which this little work has been received by the public, I take the opportunity afforded by its Sixth Edition to try to make it as far as possible more interesting and useful.

In subjects such as are here treated, there is no teaching like teaching by the eye; a single photograph or facsimile engraving will do more for clearness than whole pages of verbal description. I have therefore introduced a number of photograph illustrations of the Ancient Manuscripts and other Documents mentioned, amongst them the very curious old Palimpsest "Z," one of the greatest treasures of our Dublin University Library.

I trust that these will add vividness and interest to the story, and that the little book now going forth on its new journey more perfectly equipped will do its teaching more clearly and effectively than it has ever done before.

J. P. S.

CHRIST CHURCH VICARAGE,  
KINGSTOWN, *October, 1889.*

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## INTRODUCTION.<sup>1</sup>



Now that the complete Revised Bible is in the hands of the people, one cannot help noticing the renewal of the old questionings with which its first instalment was greeted in 1881. Not only among the poorer classes, but among many more educated people as well, there is a vaguely puzzled half-suspicious feeling with regard to this new book attempting to supersede the venerable Old Version, which their fathers and forefathers for hundreds of years past have read as God's inspired message to the world. Men are surprised at finding some passages of the old Bible so altered as quite to change their meaning, and still more perhaps at noticing here and there verses entirely omitted, which they have always regarded as part of the inspired Word of God. No wonder such questions should arise as one constantly hears when the New Version is talked of, "What new information has come to these

<sup>1</sup> The writer's thanks are especially due to the Rev. Dr Gwynn, Archbishop King's Lecturer in Divinity, T.C.D., for his kind advice and assistance in the preparation of this little work.

Bible Revisers? By what right do men, 1800 years after the time of our Lord, venture to alter the words of His revelation?" which easily lead to still further questions as to the sacred originals of our present Scriptures, and the way in which these Scriptures have come down to us.

And it is well that people should be roused to ask such questions, not merely because more attention will thereby be drawn to a Book on which such vital interests depend, but also and especially because he who seeks the answer to them, must indirectly learn, in pursuing his inquiry, what is of great importance to an intelligent appreciation of his Bible.

(a.) For he cannot investigate the subject without thereby learning (1) what Bible Revision really is, its continually recurring necessity, and the advantages that accrue from it if wisely and faithfully carried out. And the result of this will be the laying aside of unreasonable prejudices, and the removal of the disturbance which might otherwise be produced by the changes in the Revised Bible. We have grown so attached to our beautiful Old Version, after its undisturbed reign of two centuries and a half—so accustomed to appeal to it as the final arbiter on every question of religion, that there is a tendency almost to forget that it is but an English translation after all, made by fallible men, and only to be regarded as the inspired Word of God in so far as it faithfully represents what prophets and apostles and evangelists wrote thousands

of years ago in very different languages and under very different circumstances from ours.

(b.) He will also gain (what is of much value in these sceptical days) a view of the reception of the New Testament writings in the age soon after that of the apostles, in the lifetime of men whose fathers and grandfathers had been contemporaries of St. Paul and St. John. The inquiry will take him back to view the Scriptures of the second, and third, and fourth centuries, already translated into several different languages—to hear the testimony of a “great cloud of witnesses,” the ablest scholars and deepest thinkers of those days bearing united testimony to these Scriptures as the production of the apostles and evangelists, regarding them with deepest reverence as the inspired Word of God, and earnestly devoting the best of their powers to the study and elucidation of them.

(c.) But perhaps the most important result from his inquiry will be the *sense of continuity* arising from the view, at various points, of the line of connection between the Apostolic Bible and our own—the conviction of the substantial identity of our Scriptures with those of the first century. One cannot help noticing what a haziness there is in many minds as to how this Bible of ours has come down to us, a haziness which in the writer’s opinion is the fruitful parent of much unspoken doubt, or at least of that uneasy sense of “want of foundation” which, though most men are too indolent to trouble themselves about it, is often unconsciously

undermining and weakening the power of their beliefs. The reason chiefly is that they cannot trace the *continuity* of the book from apostolic days to their own. They have just two points to fix upon, one the present existence of their English Bible—the other a dim hazy speck thousands of years ago, when, as they are told, “holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,” and between these two points is a great blank, where doubts about the Bible are easily developed, a blank which “Histories of the Bible,” going back a few hundred years to Wycliffe’s Version, do very little indeed to bridge over.

Such are some of the advantages that would result from a *thorough* study of this subject. Perhaps even by means of this little sketch, those results may in some small degree be gained to busy men and women who have neither the time nor opportunity for studying it more fully. At any rate the writer desires to keep this object before him while endeavouring to answer the questions suggested by the appearance of the New Version, and with this view the wider question which includes them all is taken up, How and why did we get this Revised Bible?

# HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE.



## CHAPTER I.

### *SOURCES OF OUR BIBLE.*

§ 1. The Old Record Chest. § 2. Copyists' Errors. § 3. Necessity of Revision. § 4. Sources of Information open to Revisers. § 5. Special Reasons for Present Revision.

§ 1. LET us begin then by imagining before us the record chest of one of the early Christian churches,—say Jerusalem, or Rome, or Ephesus,—about 120 A.D., when sufficient time had elapsed since the completion of the New Testament writings to allow most of the larger churches to procure copies for themselves. In any one church, perhaps, we should not find very much, but if we collect together the documents of some of the leading churches we should have before us something of this sort:—

I. Some manuscripts of the Hebrew Old Testament books.

The reader will keep in mind that the Old Testament books were originally written in Hebrew, those of the New Testament in Greek.

II. A good many more of the Old Testament books translated into Greek for general use in the churches, Greek being the language most widely known at the time.

This translation is called the Septuagint, or "Version of the *Seventy*," from an old tradition of its having been prepared by seventy learned Jews of Alexandria.<sup>1</sup> It was made at different times, beginning somewhere about 280 B.C., and was the version commonly used by the Evangelists and Apostles. This accounts for the slight difference we sometimes notice between the Old Testament and their quotations from it, our Old Testament being translated direct from the Hebrew.

III. A few rolls of the Apocryphal Books, not received as inspired, but written by holy men in the Church, and valued for the practical teaching they contained.

IV. Either the originals or direct copies of the Gospels and the Acts, the Epistles of SS. Paul and Peter and John, and the Book of the Revelation.

§ 2. Now let us remember clearly that as we look into that old record chest of nearly 1800 years ago, we have before us all the sources from which we get our Bible.

<sup>1</sup> One story is that King Ptolemy Lagi requested from the Jews at Jerusalem a Greek version of their Scriptures for his great Alexandrian Library; that they sent seventy elders skilled in the Scriptures and in languages; that the king separated them in different cells for their work, and that when they all appeared together before him with their versions, "God was glorified, for they all agreed exactly word for word." The truth probably is, that the version was made by Alexandrian Jews, whether for King Ptolemy or not we cannot tell.

And remember further that these writings were of course all manuscript, *i.e.*, written by the hand, and that copies when needed had each to be written out, letter by letter, at a great expense of time and trouble, and unfortunately, I must add, very often too at some expense of the original correctness. However careful the scribe might be, it was almost impossible, in copying a long and difficult manuscript, to prevent the occurrence of errors. Sometimes he would mistake one letter for another—sometimes, if having the manuscript read to him, he would confound two words of similar sound—sometimes after writing in the last word of a line, on looking up again his eye would catch the same word at the end of the next line, and he would go on from that, omitting the whole line between. Remarks and explanations, too, written in the margin might sometimes in transcribing get inserted in the text.

In these and various other ways errors might creep into the copy of his manuscript. These errors would be repeated by the man that afterwards copied from this, who would also sometimes add other errors of his own. So that it is evident, as copies increased, the errors would be likely to increase with them, and therefore, as a general rule,<sup>1</sup>

THE EARLIER ANY MANUSCRIPT, THE MORE LIKELY IT  
IS TO BE CORRECT.

<sup>1</sup> This is only a general rule. Of course it is quite possible for a manuscript A.D. 1500 to be copied *direct* from one of A.D. 300, and therefore to be more correct than some a thousand years older.

## HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE.

The reader may easily test this for himself by copying a dozen pages of a book, then hand on the copy to a friend to re-copy, and let him pass on to another what he has written, and so have the operation repeated through six or eight different hands before comparing the last copy with the original. It will be an interesting illustration of the danger of errors in copying. Even in printed Bibles, whose proofs have been carefully examined and re-examined, these mistakes creep in. To take two examples out of many:—An edition published in 1653, reads 1 Cor. vi. 9, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall inherit the kingdom of God;" and the "Printer's Bible," much sought by book collectors, puts the strange anachronism in King David's mouth, "Printers have persecuted me without a cause" (Ps. cxix. 161).

We know, of course, God might have miraculously prevented scribes and compositors from making these mistakes; but it does not seem to be God's way anywhere to work miracles for us where our own careful use of the abilities He has given would suffice for the purpose.

§ 3. Although, owing to the special care exercised in transcribing the Scriptures,<sup>1</sup> the errors would be in most cases of comparatively trifling importance, yet it is evident from what has been said about the growth

<sup>1</sup> As an interesting instance of the care exercised in transcribing important documents, Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, in the second century, thus writes in one of his own books: "Whosoever thou art who shalt transcribe this book, I charge thee with an oath by our Lord Jesus

of copyists' errors, that in the course of the centuries before the invention of printing, Bible manuscripts might easily have grown very faulty indeed. Therefore the printed Bibles, taken hastily from these modern and probably corrupt manuscripts, would need a thorough revision, and this revision would need to be repeated again and again, as facilities increased, till the Scriptures were as nearly as possible as they left the inspired writers' hands.

But how is this revision to be accomplished? Of course, if the original writings had remained, it would be quite a simple operation, as a careful comparison with them would at any time discover whatever had need of correction. But, it is hardly necessary to say, the original writings have long since disappeared. Perhaps, being written on the common writing material of the day,—the papyrus paper referred to in 2 John, ver. 12,—they soon got worn out from use,<sup>1</sup> or perhaps they were destroyed in the early Christian persecutions. In any case they have totally disappeared.

How then is revision to be accomplished? In the

Christ, and by His glorious appearing, in which He cometh to judge the quick and dead, that thou carefully compare what thou hast transcribed, and correct it according to this copy whence thou hast transcribed it, and thou transcribe this oath in like manner, and place it in thy copy." Farther on I shall have to notice the solemn reverential care bestowed by the Hebrew scribes on copies of the Old Testament.

<sup>1</sup> Jerome tells of such a library in Cæsarea, already partly destroyed within a century after its formation, and of the endeavours of two presbyters to restore the manuscripts by copying them on parchment.

## HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE.

absence of these original manuscripts, what sources of information are open to Bible revisers?

§ 4. For answer let us turn from the ancient record chest, whose contents are now irrecoverably lost, and imagine beneath some oaken library roof a vast mass of manuscripts, piled up before us in three separate heaps,—manuscripts of very varied kind—stained and torn old parchments—books of faded purple, lettered with silver—beautifully designed ornamental pages—bundles of fine vellum, yellow with age, bright even yet with the gold and vermilion laid on by pious hands a thousand years since—in many shapes, in many colours, in many languages,—thousands of old Scripture writings reaching back for 1500 years.

This pile represents the great Biblical treasures stored up to-day in the various libraries of Europe—the Scriptures of all the ages almost from apostolic times. And here in this mass of old manuscripts is the material accessible to scholars for the purpose of Bible revision.

In these piles we shall find three different classes of writings. Here at the end those faded parchments, with the crowded square lettering, are *copies in the original languages* of the different Scriptures contained in the old record chest. These are known as Biblical “MANUSCRIPTS,” for though all those early Scriptures are of course written by the hand, the name *manuscripts* has been by common consent of scholars appropriated to the *copies* in the original tongue.

But those farther on are evidently different in language, the writing, at least of the few whose pages are visible, being so very unlike the others. That open manuscript on the top, written all over in running lines and loops, is a Syriac translation, and all these are ANCIENT VERSIONS, *i.e.*, translations of the Bible into the languages of early Christendom, some of them representing the Scriptures of about fifty years after the apostles.

The contents of the third pile, though a good deal resembling the Biblical manuscripts in appearance, are not even books of the Scriptures at all, but WRITINGS OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN FATHERS from the second to the fifth century. The use of these we shall see afterwards.

The science that deals with this mass of evidence is called "textual" criticism, a science which, though only in its infancy when our Authorised Version was issued, has reached in the present day a very high degree of perfection. Suppose then our revisers, men skilled in this study, are occupied on, say the Epistle to the Romans, desiring to present it as nearly as possible as it left the hands of St. Paul, how will they make use of this mass of evidence?

I. They will search for the *very oldest Greek manuscripts* in which the Epistle occurs, for, as we have already seen, the oldest are likely to be the most correct, and they will get *as many as possible* of them to compare them together for the eliminating any errors that may have crept in, for it is evident that if a num-

## HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE.

ber of copies are made of the same original, even should each of the copyists have erred, no two are likely to make exactly the same error, therefore a false reading in any one can often be corrected by comparison with the others.

II. Then they will examine the *ancient versions*, and see how the Epistle was read in Syriac and Latin and other ancient languages nearly 1700 years ago.

III. But what use can they make of the rest of the parchments—those writings of the early Christian Fathers? A very important use. They search these carefully for quotations from this Epistle. These early Fathers quoted Scripture so largely in their controversies that it has been said if all the other sources of the Bible were lost, we could recover the greater part of it from their writings. The most important of them lived in the second, third, and fourth centuries, and as they of course quote from the Scriptures in use in their time, it is like going back sixteen hundred years to ask men, How did your Scripture render this passage of St. Paul? Unfortunately their quotations seem often made from memory, which a good deal spoils the value of their testimony.

The sources of information, then, open to revisers may be briefly summed up as—

I. Manuscripts. II. Versions. III. Quotations.<sup>1</sup> Each of these will be treated of more fully in the following chapters.

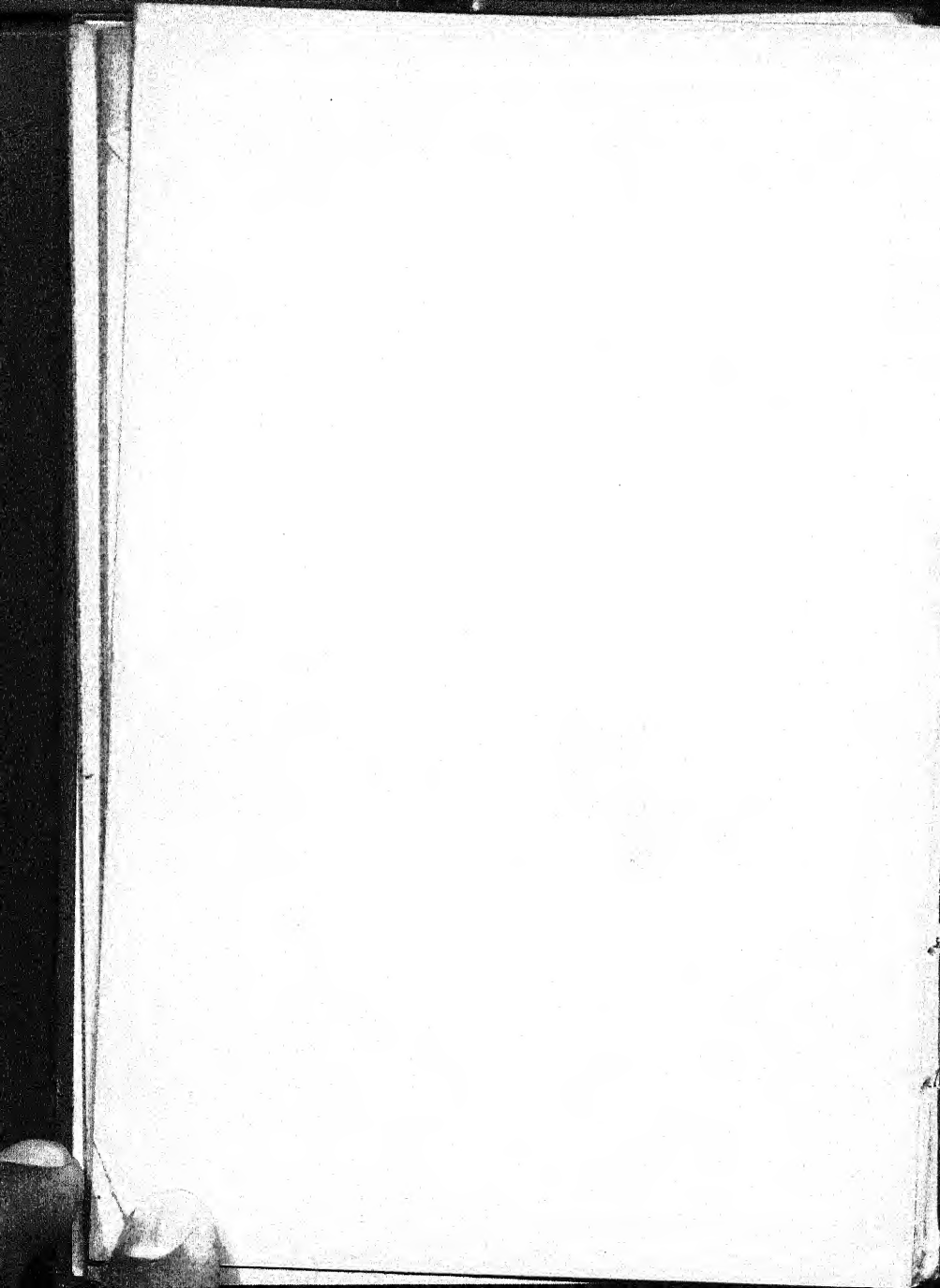
<sup>1</sup> See Diagram facing the title-page.

## SPECIMEN OF SYRIAC.

ST. JOHN I. 1-14.

PESHITO VERSION.

[illegible]



§ 5. Now the reason that so much has been said about the possible errors of copyists and our means of correcting them is that we may be in a position to understand clearly the reason of the present Bible revision, and what grounds the revisers had for altering anything.

First, then, we have access to a great many more and older manuscripts and versions and quotations than the men who prepared the Authorised Version had ever heard of.

Besides, our scholars understand those ancient languages and the science of textual criticism far better than did the scholars of King James' time.

And to these we may add a third reason, one which would always make Bible revision a necessity, even if there were no advances in scholarship or manuscript discoveries—I mean the changes owing to the natural growth of language. More than 200 words in the Authorised Version have thus changed their meaning, *e.g.*, carriages, comfort, common, conversation, damnation, let, malice, mortify, prevent, master, quick; also phrases such as, to take thought, &c., and the change often affects the meaning of important passages.

Therefore we are able to detect faults even in our almost perfect Authorised Version—mistakes here and there which scholars have known of for some time past; verses where the rendering needed to be improved, and in a few instances passages whose right to stand in the Bible at all was very doubtful. In such cases

I need hardly say that no amount of sentiment about our grand old Bible should prevent our making the corrections required.

In the following chapters we shall go through in more detail this mass of ancient manuscript evidence accessible to our revisers, and examine some of the oldest and most important writings, that we may the better understand what facilities scholars have at the present day for undertaking a Bible revision.

## CHAPTER II.

### ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS.

The Oldest Bibles in the World. § 1. The Vatican Manuscript. § 2. The Sinaitic Manuscript. § 3. The Alexandrian. § 4. Palimpsests. § 5. Cursive Manuscripts. § 6. Old Testament Revision.

LET us still keep imaged before our minds the triple pile of Biblical writings to be examined.

We come first to the MANUSCRIPTS, the *copies*<sup>1</sup> of the Scripture in the original tongues. Of the Greek there is quite a large number—more than 1500—before us, and from the difference in their condition and general appearance one is inclined to suspect that they must vary a good deal in age, and therefore probably in value. The question of determining the age of a manuscript is a very intricate one; but it should make our inspection of these the more interesting if I briefly state a few easy marks to guide us:—

*The form of the letters* is the chief guide. The oldest and therefore most valuable are written in capital

<sup>1</sup> The reader should keep this distinction clearly before him to prevent confusion. MANUSCRIPTS=copies in the original tongue. VERSIONS=translations into other tongues.

letters, and without any division between the words, as if we should write

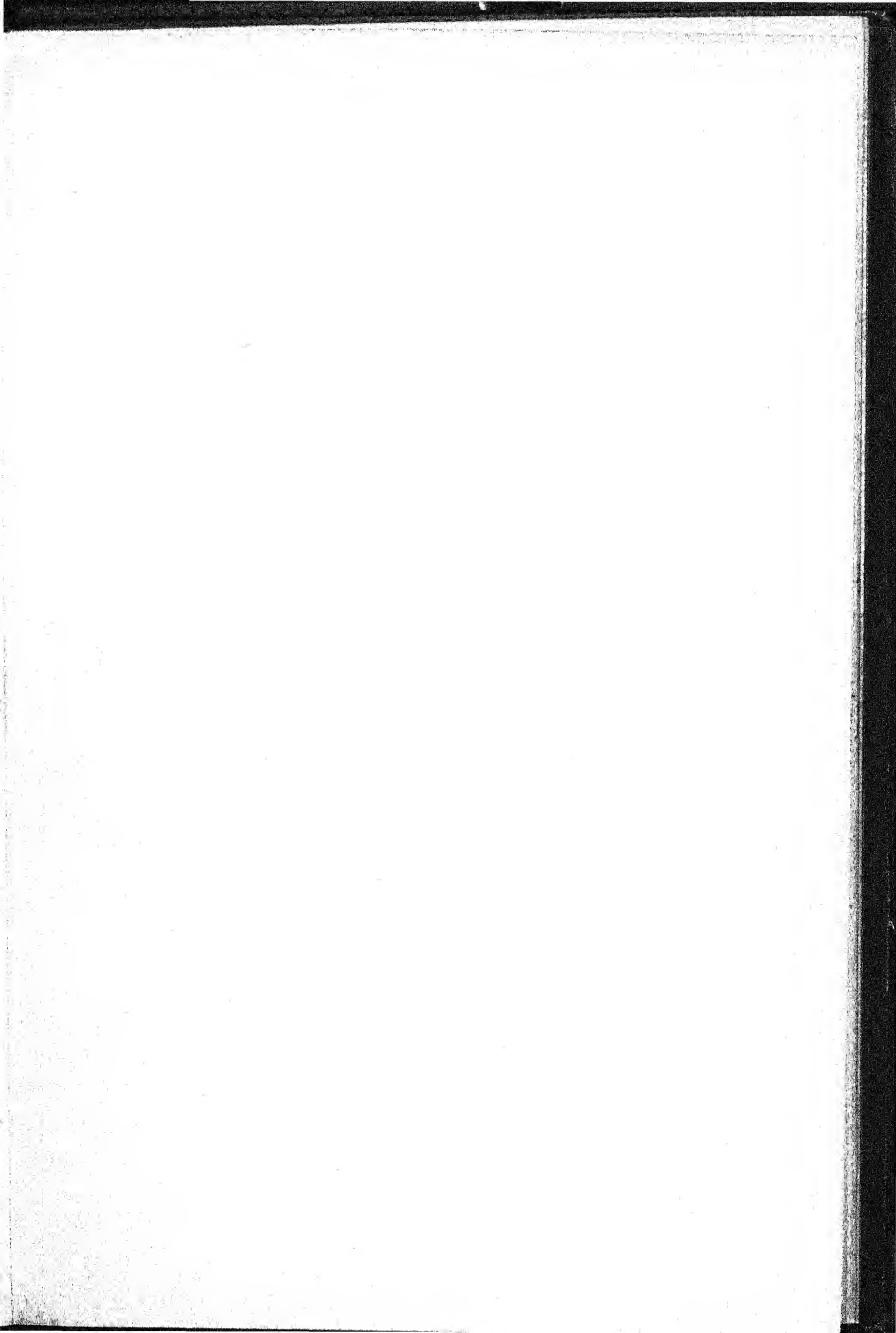
NOWWHENJ̄SWASBORNINBETHLEHEMOFJ.

These are called *uncial* manuscripts. The modern are written in a running hand like our writing, and are therefore called *cursive*. (It will be useful to remember these names, as they frequently occur in Bible commentaries, and in criticisms of the Revised Version.)

Then again, initial letters, miniatures, and in general any ornamentation of manuscripts, marks them as of comparatively late date.

Far the greater number of the manuscripts before us are written in the cursive hand, many of them beautifully illuminated and ornamented with exquisite miniatures and initials. But we turn at once from these to their less attractive companions, those few faded, worn parchments with the old uncial letters. Notice especially those three at the end bound in square book form; they are plain, faded-looking documents, with little about them to attract attention, but these three manuscripts are among the greatest treasures the Christian Church possesses—the oldest copies of the Bible in the world! They are named respectively the Vatican, Sinaitic, and Alexandrian Manuscripts. They have been largely used in the recent Bible Revision, *but they were not any of them accessible to those who prepared the Authorised Version in 1611.*

These three oldest manuscripts are curiously enough



CION KAI TIOEIAI<sup>ΚΑΙ ΤΙΟΕΙΑΙ</sup>  
 KAIOTENKOYCOH<sup>ΤΙΟΨΗ</sup>  
 TOIOYKACIACDC<sup>ΣΕΔΑΡΑ</sup>  
 ΠΡΟCΤΑΓΜΑCΥΝΗ  
 ΧΟΗCΑΝ<sup>ΑΝ</sup>ΤΗΝΙΟ  
 ΑΙΝΥΠΟΧΕΙΡΑΓΑΙ  
 ΚΑΙΗΧΟΗΕCΘΗΡ  
 ΠΡΟCΓΑΙΤΟΝΦΥ  
 ΑΑΚΑΤΩΝΓΥΝΑΚ  
 ΚΑΙΗΡΕCΕΝΑΥΤΩ  
 ΤΟΚΟΡΑCΙΟΝΚΑΙ  
 ΕΥΕΝΧΑΡΙΝΕΩ  
 ΠΙΟΝΑΥΤΟΥΚΑΙ  
 ΕCΠΕΥCΕΝΑΥΤΗΝΙ

Α  
 ΤΑΚΟΡΑCΙΟΝΑΝΓΕΛΛΟΥΕΑΝ

ΕΞΕΝΤΟΙCΑΡΩΜΑ  
 CΙΝΚΑΙΕΝΤΟΙCΕΝΗ  
 ΜΑCΙΝΚΑΙΤΟΕΕC  
 ΠΟΡΕΥΕΤΑΙΠΡΟC  
 ΤΟΝΚΑCΙΧΑΚΑΙ  
 ΩCΑΝΕΠΗΠΑΡΑ  
 ΑΔΙCΕΙΝΥΤΗΝCΥ  
 ΜΕΙCΕΡΧΕCΘΑΥ  
 ΤΩΑΤΟΤΟΥΓΥΝ  
 ΚΑΘΝΟCΕΒΕΙΩΝ  
 ΚΑCΙΧΕΙΩΝΔΕΙ  
 ΑΗCΕΙCΤΟΡΕΥCΙΜ  
 ΚΑΙΤΡΟCΗΜΕΡΑ  
 ΑΠΟΤΡΕΧΕΙΕΡΕ

ΤΙΜΗΓΥΝΑΙ

THE SINAITIC MANUSCRIPT.

Photographed from one of the scraps found by Dr. Tischendorf in the Old Basket at Mount Sinai (see p. 24).

in possession of the three great branches of the Christian Church. The ALEXANDRIAN (called for shortness *Codex A*) belongs to Protestant England, and is kept in the manuscript room of the British Museum; the VATICAN (*Codex B*) is in the Vatican Library at Rome; and the SINAITIC (*Codex Aleph*), which has only lately been discovered, is one of the treasures of the Greek Church at St. Petersburg.

These manuscripts show us the Bible as it existed soon after the apostolic days. There has been a good deal of discussion about their age, which need not be entered on here; but we shall not be far from the truth if we say roundly that they range from about 300 to 450 A.D. Therefore the oldest is about as distant in time from the original inspired writings as the Revised is from the Authorised Version. All the Greek manuscripts before this time seem to have perished in the terrible persecutions which were directed not only against the Christians themselves, but also and with special force against their sacred writings.

§ 1. THE VATICAN MANUSCRIPT. Each of these three manuscripts has its history. The most ancient, it is generally agreed, is the Vatican Manuscript, which has lain at least four or five hundred years in the Vatican Library at Rome. One is much inclined to grudge the Roman Church the possession of this our most valuable manuscript; for the papal authorities have been very jealous guardians, and most persons capable of examining it aright have been refused access to it.

Dr. Tregelles, one of our most eminent students of textual criticism, made an attempt; but he says they would not let him open the volume without searching his pockets, and depriving him of pens and ink and paper; the two priests told off to watch him would try to distract his attention if he seemed too intent on any passage, and if he studied any part of it too long they would snatch away the book. However, it has of late years become easily accessible through the excellent fac-similes made by order of Pope Pius IX., which may be seen in our chief public libraries.

Here is the manuscript itself, over 700 leaves of the finest vellum, about a foot square, bound together in book form. You will see that it is not quite perfect, having lost Gen. i.-xlv., as well as Psalms cv.-cxxxvii., and all after Heb. ix. 14 of the New Testament. The original writing must have been beautifully delicate and finely formed. There are only a few words left here and there by which to judge of this; for from one end to the other, the whole manuscript has been travelled over by the pen of some meddlesome scribe of about the tenth century. Probably he was afraid of the precious writing fading out if it were not thus inked over; but if so his fears were quite groundless, for here are some of the words which he passed over (considering them incorrect) remaining still perfectly clear and legible after the lapse of 1500 years. Each page contains three columns, and the writing, you see, is in capital letters, without any division between the words. This makes it less easy

to read, but of course it was done to save space at a time when writing material was very expensive.

To carry this saving further, words are written smaller and more crowded as they approach the end of a line, and for the same reason was adopted the plan of contracted words, which has often been the cause of manuscript errors. First, they cut off the final M's and N's at the end of a word, marking the omission by a line across the top, as if we should write LONDŌ for London; then they proceeded to the dropping of final syllables, and from that to the shortening of frequently recurring words, like the name Jesus or God. We might fairly represent these peculiarities (which are common to all the early manuscripts) by writing thus in English (Titus ii. 11, 12):

FORTHEGRACEOF $\overline{\text{GDB}}$ RINGING  
SALVATIONHATHAPPEARED  
TOALL $\overline{\text{MN}}$ TEACHINGUSTHATDEN  
YINGUNGODLINESSANDWOR  
LDLYLUSTWESHOULDLIVESOB  
ERLYANDGODLYINTHISPRES $\overline{\text{ENT}}$   
EVILWORLDLOOKINGFORTHAT

One remark more before we lay it aside. You will notice in the Revised New Testament the passage at the end of St. Mark's Gospel printed in as in some degree doubtful, and a notice in the margin that "the two oldest Greek manuscripts omit these verses." Now this and the Sinaitic are the two manuscripts referred to, and if we turn to the place you will see that this one, while omitting the passage, curiously

enough leaves a blank space for it on the page, showing that the scribe knew of its existence, but was undecided whether he should put it in or not.

§ 2. THE SINAITIC MANUSCRIPT. There is no need of describing this celebrated manuscript, which on the whole you see very much resembles the other; but the story of its discovery about forty years ago is full of interest. It is called the Sinaitic Manuscript from the place where it was found by the great German scholar, Dr. Tischendorf. His whole life was given up to the discovery and study of ancient manuscripts of the Bible, and he travelled all over the East, searching every old library he could get into for the purpose; but it was quite unexpectedly in St. Catharine's Convent, at the foot of Mount Sinai, that he discovered this the "pearl of all his researches," as he calls it.

In visiting the library of the convent in the month of May 1844, he perceived in the middle of the great hall a basket full of old parchments, and the librarian told him that two heaps of similar old documents had already been used for the fires. What was his surprise to find in the basket a number of sheets of a copy of the Septuagint (Greek) Old Testament, the most ancient-looking manuscript that he had ever seen. The authorities of the convent allowed him to take away about forty sheets, as they were only intended for the fire; but he displayed so much satisfaction with his gift that the suspicion of the monks was aroused as to the value of the manuscript, and they refused to give him any more.

He returned to Germany, and with his precious sheets made a great sensation in the literary world. But he took very good care not to tell where he had got them, as he still had hopes of securing the remainder; and he soon had reason to congratulate himself on his caution, for the English Government at once sent out a scholar to buy up any valuable Greek manuscripts he could lay hands on, and poor Dr. Tischendorf was very uneasy lest the Englishman should stumble upon the old basket on Mount Sinai. You may judge of his relief when he saw the Englishman's report soon after, telling of his failure; "for," said he, "after the visit of such a critic as Dr. Tischendorf, I could not, of course, expect any success." The doctor seems quite to enjoy the telling this part of the story.

He tried next, by means of an influential friend at the court of Egypt, to procure the rest of the manuscript, but without success. "The monks of the convent," wrote his friend, "have since your departure learned the value of the parchments, and now they will not part with them at any price." So he paid another visit to Mount Sinai, but could only find one sheet, containing eleven lines of the book of Genesis, which showed him that the manuscript originally contained the entire Old Testament.

To shorten the story, I must pass over fifteen years, during which time he had enlisted the sympathy of the Emperor of Russia, and in 1859 we find him again at the convent with a commission from the Emperor himself. However, he found very little of any value, and

had made his arrangements to leave without accomplishing his mission, when a quite unexpected event brought about all that he wished for. The very evening before he was to leave he was walking in the grounds with the steward of the convent, and as they returned the monk asked him into his cell to take some refreshment. Scarcely had they entered the cell, when, resuming his former conversation, the monk said: "I too have read a copy of that Septuagint." And so saying he took down a bulky bundle, wrapped in red cloth, and laid it on the table. Tischendorf opened the parcel, and to his great surprise found not only those very fragments that he had seen fifteen years before, but also other parts of the Old Testament, the New Testament complete, and some of the Apocryphal Books.

Full of joy, which this time he had the self-command to conceal, he asked in a careless way for permission to look over it in his bedroom. "And there by myself," he says, "I gave way to my transports of joy. I knew that I held in my hand one of the most precious Biblical treasures in existence, a document whose age and importance exceeded that of any I had ever seen after twenty years' study of the subject."

At length, through the Emperor's influence, he succeeded in obtaining the precious manuscript, which is now stored up in the Library of St. Petersburg, the greatest treasure which the Eastern Church possesses. Strange that after all the vicissitudes of fifteen cen-

turies it should at length be restored to the world only twenty-five years since! It is now easily accessible to scholars through its fac-similes in all our great libraries.

§ 3. THE ALEXANDRIAN MANUSCRIPT (Codex A). This youngest of our three great manuscripts has special interest for us, being in the custody of England, and preserved with our great national treasures in the British Museum. It was presented to Charles I. by Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople, A.D. 1628, and therefore arrived in England seventeen years too late to be of use in preparing our Authorised Version. Notice the Arabic inscription on the first sheet, stating that it was written "by the hand of Thekla the Martyr."

Only ten leaves are missing from the Old Testament part, but the New Testament is much more defective, having lost twenty-five leaves from the beginning of St. Matthew, two from St. John, and three from Corinthians. It is written, you see, two columns on a page, the Vatican and Sinaitic having respectively three and four. The original can be seen at the British Museum, but copies which exactly represent it are, like those of the other two, kept in our chief public libraries.

§ 4. Here is the Codex of Ephraem, a very curious manuscript, all stained and soiled, and seemingly of little value, as it is written in quite a modern hand. It requires a closer examination to notice under that

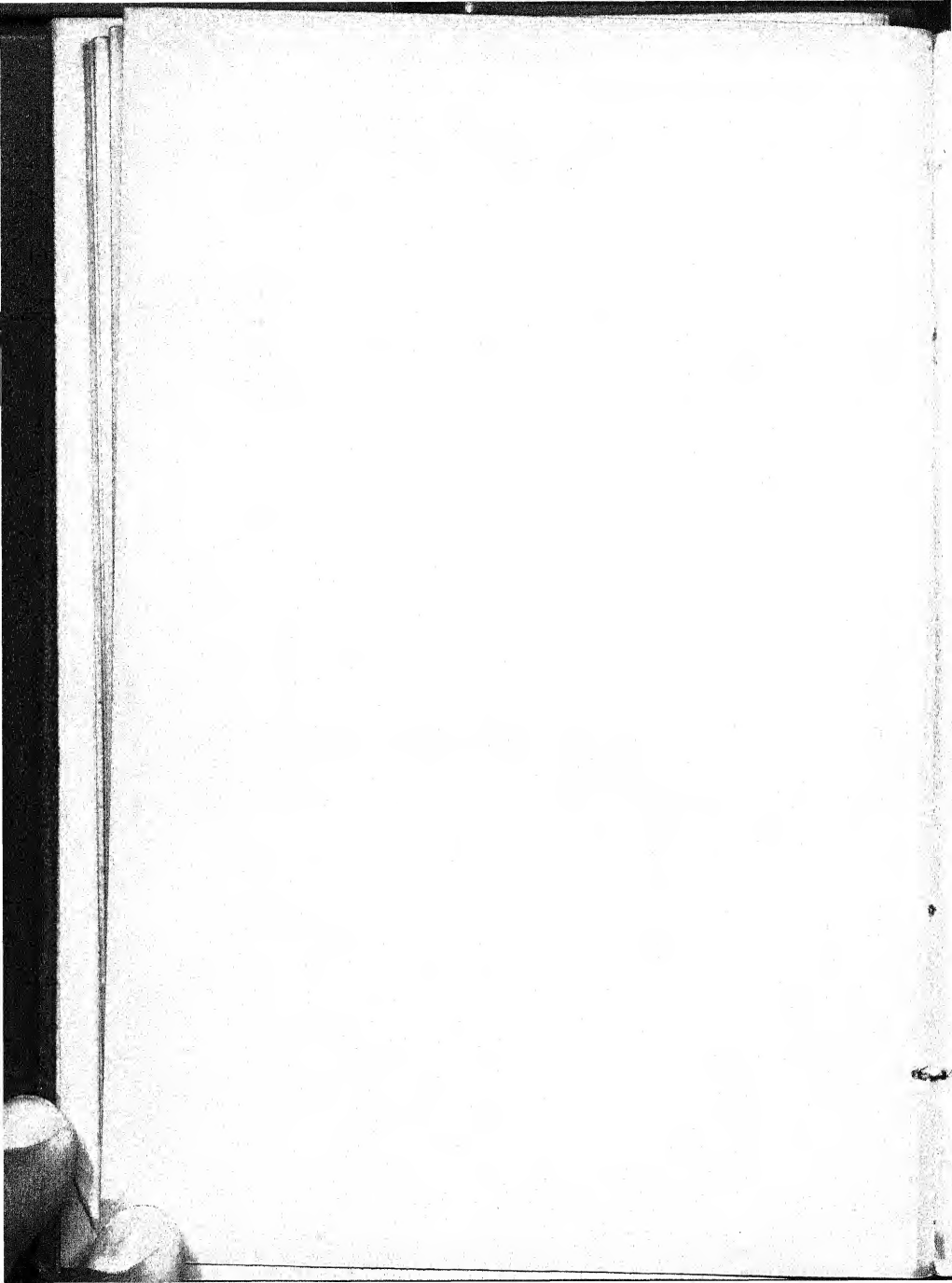
straggling handwriting the faint, faded lines of old uncial letters. This is what is called a Palimpsest or Rescript Manuscript, *i.e.*, one that has had its original contents rubbed out to make room for some other writing. We noticed already contractions, &c., adopted to save parchment at a time when it was very expensive. For the same purpose scribes sometimes used old parchments that had been written on before, and, by carefully scraping and pumicing out the old letters, made the skin tolerably fit for use again.

It need hardly be said that in many cases the writing thus blotted out was of far greater value than that which replaced it, and especially is it so in this case, where an ancient and valuable copy of the Scriptures was in the twelfth century coolly scrubbed out to make room for some theological discourses of Ephraem, an old Syrian Father.

The old writing, however, had not been so thoroughly rubbed but that some dim traces remained, which drew attention to the manuscript about 200 years since. It was very difficult to decipher the old hand till some chemical preparation applied in 1834 revived a good part of it, though it very much stained and defaced the vellum. The MS. was then found to contain a considerable portion of both Old and New Testaments, and it is considered almost if not quite as old as the Alexandrian. It belongs to the Royal Library at Paris.

Here is another of those interesting Palimpsest manuscripts, in possession of Trinity College, Dublin, and lying beside it a later one, the Codex Zacynthus





from the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

§ 5. All that we have examined up to this date are of uncial type, which, as we have seen, is a mark of their antiquity. Of these Uncials we have altogether about a hundred.

Of the more modern manuscripts, in the cursive or running hand, there are more than 1500 accessible to scholars. It has been already remarked that it is quite possible for a comparatively modern manuscript to possess a high value, as, for example, suppose a scribe of the fifteenth century had copied in running hand direct from the "Vatican." For this and other reasons some of our Cursives are very important evidence. There is one, for instance, the "Queen of the Cursives," as it is called, which, for its valuable readings, ranks above many a far older Uncial, and there are four others, quite modern in date (twelfth to fourteenth centuries), which have been shown by Professor Abbott and the late Professor Ferrar, of Trinity College, Dublin,<sup>1</sup> to be transcribed from one and the same ancient manuscript, which was probably little later than our Alexandrian Codex.

If we remember that ten or twelve manuscripts, and these generally modern, are all we have for ascertaining the text of most classical authors, it will help us to understand what an enormous mass of evidence there is available for the purpose of Scripture revision.

<sup>1</sup> "Collation of Four Important Manuscripts," by W. H. Ferrar, F.T.C.D., edited by T. K. Abbott, F.T.C.D. Dublin, 1877.

§ 6. The Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament need occupy little time, the earliest we possess dating no earlier than about the tenth century. The lack of early manuscripts here is, however, of less importance. As far as we can learn there seems to have been a gradual rough sort of revision of the Palestine manuscripts continually going on almost from the days of Ezra. About a thousand years ago this process, known as the Masoretic Revision, came to an end, and thus at that early date the Hebrew Old Testament was made as nearly correct as the best scholarship of the Jewish academies could make it, after which the older manuscripts gradually disappeared.

The existing Hebrew manuscripts, then, though not very old, are of great authority, and all the more so owing to the reverence of Jewish scribes for the Word of God, and the consequent carefulness of their transcription. So scrupulous were they that even if a manifest error were in the copy they transcribed from, they would not meddle with it in the text, but would write in the margin what the true reading should be; if they found one letter larger than another, or a word running beyond the line, or any other mere irregularity, they would copy it exactly as it stood. They recorded how many verses in each book, and the middle verse of each, and how many verses began with particular letters, &c., &c. Such exactness, of course, very much lessened the danger of erroneous copying, and makes our Hebrew Scriptures far more trustworthy than they could otherwise be.

The reason then that there are so few changes in the Revised Old Testament, as compared with the New, is that we have less need as well as less means of making any corrections.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the chief grounds for undertaking Old Testament revision are the increased knowledge of Hebrew and of textual criticism, together with the changes through natural growth of the English language itself. We may add also, for their united evidence is very important, the more thorough study in late years of the Septuagint and the Targums, together with the Vulgate and other ancient versions, to be described in the next chapter.

<sup>1</sup> It is no reflection on the Old Testament Revisers to suggest also that they could scarcely avoid being influenced in some degree by the strong feeling exhibited against the many changes in the New Testament portion.

## CHAPTER III.

### ANCIENT VERSIONS AND QUOTATIONS.

- § 1. Various Early Versions. § 2. An ancient "Revised Bible."  
§ 3. How Revision was regarded fifteen centuries ago.  
§ 4. Advantage of this investigation. § 5. Quotations from  
Ancient Fathers.

§ 1. WE are to examine now our second pile—the ANCIENT VERSIONS, *i.e.*, the translations of the Bible into the languages of early Christendom long before the oldest of our present Greek manuscripts were written. These were the Bibles used by men, some of whose parents might easily have seen the apostles themselves, and therefore it is evident that, even though only translations, they must often be of great value in determining the original text.

There are the old Syriac Scriptures, which were probably in use about fifty years after the New Testament was written, a Version representing very nearly the language of the people among whom our Lord moved. Those discoloured parchments beside them are Egyptian, Ethiopic, and Armenian Versions, which would be more useful if our scholars understood these languages better; and the beautiful silver-lettered book,





with its leaves of purple parchment, is the Version of Ulfilas, bishop of the fierce Gothic tribes about A.D. 350.<sup>1</sup> Here are the old Latin, which, with the Syriac, are the earliest of all our Versions, and the most valuable for the purpose of textual criticism.

But what is this Version piled up in such enormous numbers, far exceeding that of all the others put together, some of its copies, too, ornamented with exquisite beauty?

§ 2. It is a Version which just now should possess very special interest for English readers—St. Jerome's Latin Vulgate, the great "Revised Bible" of the ancient Western Church. This is its story.

Towards the end of the fourth century, so many errors had crept into the old Latin Versions, that the Latin-speaking churches were in danger of losing the pure Scripture of the apostolic days. Just at this crisis, when scholars were keenly feeling the need of a revision, there returned to Rome from his Bethlehem hermitage one of the greatest scholars and holiest men of the day, Eusebius Hieronymus, better known to us as St. Jerome, and his high reputation pointed him out at once as the man to undertake this important task. Damasus, bishop of Rome, applied to him for that purpose, and Jerome undertook the revision, though he was deeply sensible of the prejudice which his work would arouse among those who, he says,

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon says: "He prudently suppressed the four books of Kings, as they might tend to irritate the fierce spirit of the barbarians."

"thought that ignorance was holiness." His revision of the New Testament was completed in 385, and the Old Testament he afterwards translated direct from the original Hebrew, a task which probably no other scholar of the time would have been capable of. We shall better understand the value of his work if we remember that it is almost as old as the earliest of our present Greek manuscripts, and since Jerome of course used the oldest manuscripts to be had in his day, his authorities would have probably extended back to the days of the apostles.

No other work has ever had such an influence on the history of the Bible. For more than a thousand years it was the parent of every version of the Scriptures<sup>1</sup> in Western Europe, and even now, when the Greek and Hebrew manuscripts are so easily accessible, the Rhemish and Douay Testaments are translations direct from the Vulgate, and its influence is quite perceptible even on our own Authorised Version.

§ 3. How do you think the good people of the fourth century thanked St. Jerome for his wonderful Bible? Remembering the prejudice which our Revised New Testament excited only four years ago, it is interesting to recall the story how the Revision of the old monk of Bethlehem was received.

It was called revolutionary and heretical; it was pronounced subversive of all faith in Holy Scriptures; it was said to be an impious altering of the Inspired

<sup>1</sup> See Diagram facing the title-page.

Word of God. In fact, for centuries after everything was said against it that ignorant bigotry could suggest to bring it into disrepute. The Christians of that day had their old Bible, which they venerated highly and believed to be quite correct, and probably the sound of its sentences was as musical in their ears, who could associate them with the holiest moments of their lives, as that of our beautiful old version is in ours.

But St. Jerome fought his battle, perhaps with more temper than was necessary,<sup>1</sup> insisting that no amount of sentiment could be a plea for a faulty Bible, and that the most venerable translation must give way if found to disagree with the original text.

It is instructive to us to see how completely the tide had turned at the time of the Council of Trent, a thousand years later. Men had then got as attached to the version of St. Jerome as those of the fourth century had been to its predecessors. In fact, they seem almost to have forgotten that it was only a translation. It is the version of the Church, they said, and in her own language; "Why should it yield to Greek and Hebrew

<sup>1</sup> Thus, writing to Marcella, he mentions certain poor creatures (homunculos), who studiously calumniate him for his correcting words in the Gospels. "I could afford to despise them," he says, "if I stood upon my rights; for a lyre is played in vain to an ass. If they do not like the water from the pure fountain-head, let them drink of the muddy streams;" and again, at the close of the letter, he returns to the attack of those "bipedes asellos" (two-legged donkeys). "Let them read, '*Rejoicing in hope, serving the time*;' let us read, '*Rejoicing in hope, serving the Lord*;' let them consider that an accusation should not under any circumstances be received against an elder; let us read, '*Against an elder receive not an accusation; but before two or three witnesses*,'" &c. (Ep. 28).

manuscripts, which have been for all these hundreds of years in the hands of Jewish unbelievers and Greek schismatics?" Well, how did they act? They decreed in council that the old Vulgate should be considered correct, and to this day, with all the progress in textual research, their Church has refused to advance any farther,

"Resting, amid the rush of progression,  
Like a frozen ship on a frozen sea."

An amusing exhibition of their feeling at the time is a passage in the preface to the Complutensian Polyglot Bible, where the Hebrew and the Greek and the Latin Vulgate were printed in parallel columns side by side, the venerable old Vulgate being in the middle, which the editors with grim humour compared to the position of our Lord between the two thieves at the crucifixion! Of course they did not mean any slight to the original Scriptures, but their prejudice led them to suspect, or to fancy they had a right to suspect, that the Jews and Greeks might have corrupted the manuscript copies.

§ 4. This glance at the Ancient Versions will be sufficient for our purpose. There is a large number now accessible to scholars, and every year the study of them is increasing. In passing, I would point to this part of our subject to illustrate what was said in the introduction of the advantage indirectly resulting from the investigation of questions suggested by our

New Revision. For here we find that at a time when some sceptical writers would have us believe our New Testament books were scarcely written, they had been translated and copied and re-copied in the languages of early Christendom; commentaries and harmonies of the Gospels had been written; a list of the books had been prepared (of which we have still a portion called the Muratorian Fragment), and they were regarded in all arguments between Christians of the time as referees having divine authority. All this will be seen still more clearly after we have briefly glanced at the third source of information open to revisers:—

§ 5. THE QUOTATIONS IN EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS. The quantity of these writings is great, but they have been up to this time very imperfectly examined. In spite of the disadvantages of the quotations being often fragmentary, and sometimes—as will be seen in the examples—made loosely from memory, they are yet of great value in determining the text of ancient Bibles, some of them going back to the days of the original New Testament writings. Let us turn over a few of them at random, taking the earliest in preference.

(a.) Here is the Epistle of Barnabas, which Dr. Tischendorf found bound up with his Sinaitic Manuscript. It is supposed, though without good reason, to have been written by St. Paul's companion; but certainly it is not much later than his date. Notice these expressions: Beware, therefore, lest it come upon us as it is written, "There be many called but few

chosen;" again, "Give to him that asketh thee." And farther on he says, "that Christ chose as His apostles men who were sinners, because He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

(b.) This next is an Epistle by Clement, one of the early bishops of Rome, whom ancient writers unhesitatingly assert to be the Clement mentioned by St. Paul in Phil. iv. 3. This letter is a very valuable one, and Irenæus, who was bishop of Lyons a little later, says of it, "It was written by Clement, who had seen the blessed apostles and conversed with them, who had the preaching of the blessed apostles still sounding in his ears and their tradition before his eyes." The epistle was addressed to the Church of Corinth, and Dionysius, bishop of Corinth about 170 A.D., bears witness "that it had been wont to be read in his church from ancient times." Here are a few expressions found in it: "Remembering the words of the Lord Jesus which He spake, teaching us gentleness and long-suffering; for He said, 'Be merciful, that ye may obtain mercy; forgive, that it may be forgiven unto you; as ye give it shall be given unto you; as ye judge ye shall be judged; with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you.'"

And again, "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, 'Woe to the man by whom offences come; it were better for him that he had not been born than that he should offend one of My elect. It were better for him that a millstone should be tied about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the

depths of the sea, than that he should offend one of My little ones.' "

(c.) Of about the same date is this book, the Shepherd of Hermas, by some conjectured to be the Hermas of Rom. xvi. 14. Here we have reference to the confessing and denying of Christ, the parable of the seed sown, the expression, "He that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery," &c. &c.

(d.) St. Ignatius became bishop of Antioch about forty years after the Ascension. Here are a few quotations from him: "Christ was baptized of John, that all righteousness might be fulfilled in Him." "Be ye wise as serpents in all things, and harmless as a dove." "The Spirit is from God, for it knows whence it cometh and whither it goeth."

(e.) The martyr Polycarp was a disciple of St. John, and is thus spoken of by Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, who in his youth had seen him: "I can tell the place in which the blessed Polycarp sat and taught, and his going out and coming in, and the manner of his life, and how he related his conversations with John and others who had seen the Lord, all which Polycarp related agreeably to the Scriptures." Of this old martyr we have an epistle remaining, and though it is a very short one, it contains nearly forty clear allusions to the New Testament books, some of which are valuable for critical purposes.

(f.) Those old parchments lying beside Polycarp's Epistle, are the "Apologies," by Justin Martyr, and his

"Dialogus with Trypho," written about the year 150. They contain very interesting quotations, though unfortunately they seem often quoted from memory, and therefore lose much of their value. This is only what we might expect. "When we think it strange," says Dr. Salmon in his new book,<sup>1</sup> "that an ancient father of Justin's date should not quote with perfect accuracy, we forget that in those days, when manuscripts were scarce and concordances did not exist, the process of finding a passage in a manuscript (written possibly with no spaces between the words) was not performed with quite as much ease as an English clergyman writing his sermon, with a Bible and Concordance by his side, can turn up any text he wishes to refer to, and yet we should be sorry to vouch for the verbal accuracy of all the Scripture citations we hear in sermons at the present day."

The following are a few of Justin's quotations:—  
'I gave you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and venomous beasts, and on all the power of the enemy.' "Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow turn not away; for if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what new thing do ye? Even the publicans do this. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where robbers break through; but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt." "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul,

<sup>1</sup> "Introd. New Testament," p. 82.

or what shall a man give in exchange for it?" And again, "Be ye kind and merciful, as your Father also is kind and merciful, and maketh His sun to rise on sinners, and the righteous and the wicked. Take no thought what ye shall eat or what ye shall put on; are ye not better than the birds and the beasts? and God feedeth them. Take no thought, therefore, what ye shall eat or what ye shall put on, for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But seek ye the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you. For where his treasure is, there is the mind of man."

On account of the double object in view, I have selected only writers of the second century to illustrate the use of the "Quotations." More important for purposes of criticism, though later in date, are those thick manuscripts further on, the works of Origen and Clement of Alexandria early in the third century, and in the fourth Basil, and Augustine, and Jerome the great reviser, and many others, whose writings in large quantity are available for criticism of the Bible.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *EARLY ENGLISH VERSIONS.*

- § 1. The Bible Poet. § 2. Eadhelm and Egbert. § 3. The Monk of Yarrow. § 4. A Royal Translator. § 5. Curious Expressions.

THUS we have seen the form in which the Scriptures existed in the age soon after that of the apostles, and found the threefold line of evidence available at the present day for the purpose of Bible Revision—(1.) Greek and Hebrew manuscripts; (2.) Ancient Versions; and (3.) Quotations from the then existing Scriptures in the works of early Christian writers.

And now that we are to trace the connection of these with our present English Bible, it becomes necessary for our purpose to ask, with the triple pile of parchments before us, how much of this material was accessible a thousand years ago, when the history of our English Bible begins. For it is evident that the value of a Scripture version at any period depends on the value of the old manuscript material accessible, and the ability of the men of that day to use it.

For answer we take from the centre pile those few faded worn-looking copies, portions of the Vulgate and older Latin versions, and place them on one side.<sup>1</sup> Those are the Scriptures which have come down to us from the monasteries of ancient England, and as we compare side by side this handful of old parchments with the great mass of writings from which it has been drawn, we are comparing together the sources of the earliest and latest English Versions—of the Anglo-Saxon Scriptures of a thousand years since, and the Revised Bible which is in our hands to-day.<sup>2</sup> The growth of the English Bible, which took place in the meantime, we are now briefly to trace.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There were also many works of the early Christian Fathers, but as no one then thought of using them for purposes of textual criticism, we need not take them into account.

<sup>2</sup> On page facing the title I have tried to show by a diagram the gradual increase in the sources of our English Bible.

<sup>3</sup> Here comes a temptation to an Irish writer. Is he bound to start from the seventh century, when the earliest known translations from these manuscripts were made? May he not go back a little further, and let rise the historic memories called up by those manuscripts themselves? May he not indulge a little in the "Irish pride of better days" (the only source of pride to poor Ireland in the present), and picture the noble libraries of Durrow and Armagh, to which England probably owes her earliest Scriptures—when St. Columb carried his manuscripts to lonely Iona in the days of the glory of the Irish Church, when Ireland was the light of the Western World, and Irishmen went forth from the "Island of Saints" to evangelise the heathen English?

Seriously, it seems worth spending a few sentences to point out that not from Rome, but from the ancient Irish Church, did England chiefly derive her Christianity, and probably her earliest Scriptures. What seems best remembered in connection with the question, is the famous scene of Gregory in the slave-market at Rome, admiring the beautiful English children—"not Angles, but angels," said he, "if they were only Christians"—and the consequent sending of the Abbot Augustine to England with a band of Christian missionaries. It needs to be

§ 1. Though England had no complete Bible before Wycliffe's days, attempts were made from very early times to present the Scriptures in the language of the people, and the story of these ancient translations from the Latin manuscripts before us, forms certainly one of the most interesting though not most important portions of the history of the English Bible.

It is now 1200 years since, on a winter night, a poor Saxon cowherd lay asleep in a stable of the famous Abbey of Whitby. Grieved and dispirited, he had come in from the feast where his masters, and some even of his companions, during the amusements of the night, had engaged in the easy, alliterative rhyming of those simple early days. But Cædmon could make no song,<sup>1</sup> and his soul was very sad. Suddenly, as he lay,

pointed out that, according to our best historians, this Roman mission soon lost its early ardour, penetrating little further than Kent, where it originally landed, and that the conversion of England, which had become completely pagan under Saxon rule, was for the most part left to the missionaries of the Irish Church. From St. Columb's monastery at Iona the Irish preachers came, and travelled over the greater part of the country. Aidan, their leader, went through the wilds of Yorkshire and Northumbria, with King Oswald as his interpreter, a former student of Iona—while Chad and Boisil led their little bands of missionaries through the centre of the heathen land, returning at stated periods to Lindisfarne, where Aidan had fixed his episcopal see. And not England only owes a debt to the Irish Church. As far off as the Apennines and the Alps the traces of her enthusiastic missionaries are found, and "for a time it seemed as if the course of the world's history was to be changed, as if the older Celtic race, that Roman and German had swept before them, had turned to the moral conquest of their conquerors, as if Celtic and not Latin Christianity was to mould the destinies of the churches of the West."

<sup>1</sup> "Being at the feast, when all agreed for glee sake to sing in turn, he no sooner saw the harp come towards him, than he rose from the board and returned homewards."—*Account of Cædmon in Bede's Ecc. Hist.*

it seemed to him that a heavenly glory lighted up his stable, and in the midst of the glory One appeared who had been cradled in a manger six hundred years before.

"Sing, Cædmon," He said, "sing some song to me."

"I cannot sing," was the sorrowful reply, "for this cause it is that I came hither."

"Yet," said He who stood before him, "yet shalt thou sing to me."

"What shall I sing?"

"The beginning of created things."

And as he listened, a divine power seemed to come on him, and words that he had never heard before rose up before his mind.<sup>1</sup> And so the vision passed away. But the power remained with Cædmon, and in the morning the Saxon cowherd went forth from the cattle-stalls transformed into a mighty poet!

Hilda the abbess heard the wondrous tale, and from one of those Latin manuscripts she translated to him a story of the Scriptures. Next day it was reproduced in a beautiful poem, followed by another and another as the spirit of the poet grew powerful within him. Entranced, the abbess and the brethren heard, and they acknowledged the "grace that had

<sup>1</sup> The words that came to the sleeper's mind are recorded by King Alfred. They begin :—

"Now must we praise  
the grandeur of Heaven's kingdom ;  
the Creator's might,  
and his mind's thought ;  
glorious father of men,  
The Lord the Eternal,  
who formed the beginning," &c. &c.

been conferred on him by the Lord." They bade him lay aside his secular habit and enter the monastic life, and from that day forward the Whitby cowherd devoted himself with enthusiasm to the task that had been set him in the vision. "Others after him strove to compose religious poems, but none could vie with him, for he learnt not the art of poetry from men, neither of men, but of God." In earnest passionate words, which yet remain, he sung for the simple people "of the creation of the world, of the origin of man, and of all the history of Israel; of the Incarnation, and Passion, and Resurrection of Christ, and His Ascension; of the terror of future judgment, the horror of hell pains, and the joys of the kingdom of heaven."<sup>1</sup>

Though his work has of course no right to rank among Bible translations, being merely an attempt to sing for the ignorant people the substance of the inspired story, yet we venture to give a brief extract, translated into modern English, telling of the appearance of Christ to His disciples after the resurrection:—

"What time the Lord God  
from death arose  
so strongly was no  
Satan armed  
though he were with iron  
all girt round

<sup>1</sup> "Some account of Cædmon from Bede's *Eccles. Hist.*, translated into Anglo-Saxon by King Alfred."—*Published by the Society of Antiquaries, London.*

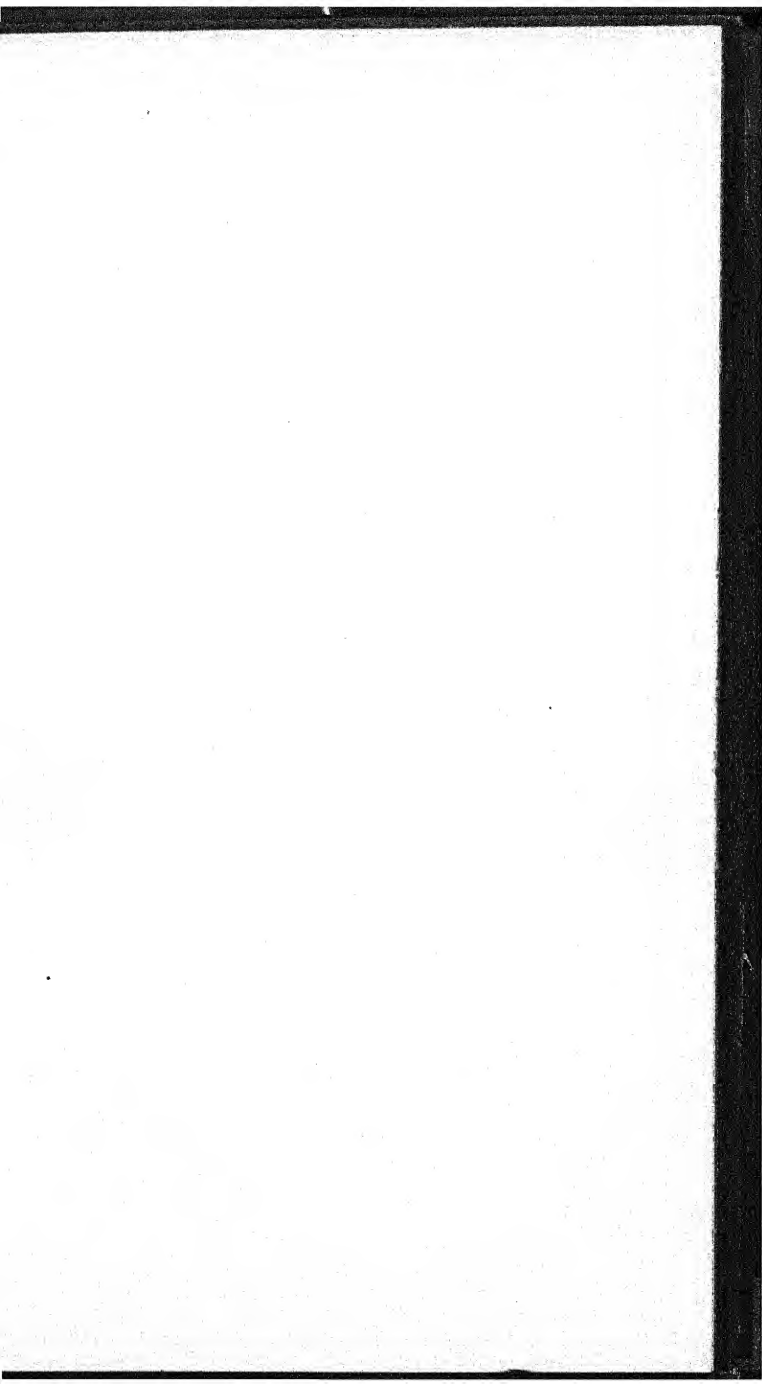
that might that great  
force resist ;  
for he went forth,  
the Lord of angels,  
in the strong city,  
and bade fetch  
angels all bright  
and even bade say  
to Simon Peter  
that he might on Galilee  
behold God  
eternal and firm,  
as he ere did.  
Then as I understand, went  
the disciples together  
all to Galilee,  
inspired by the Spirit,  
The holy Son of God,  
whom they saw  
were the Lord's son.  
Then over against the disciples stood  
the Lord Eternal,  
God in Galilee,  
so that the disciples  
thither all ran  
Where the eternal was,  
fell on the earth,  
and at his feet bowed,  
thanking the Lord  
that thus it befell

HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE.

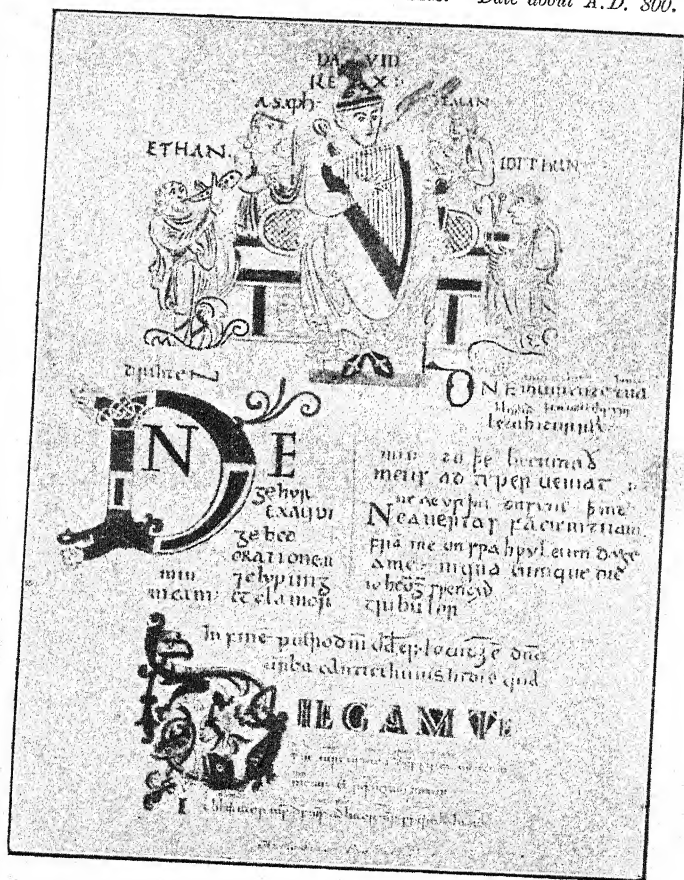
that they should behold  
the creator of angels.  
Then forthwith spake  
Simon Peter and said,  
Art thou thus, Lord,  
with power gifted?  
We saw thee  
at one time when  
they laid thee  
in loathsome bondage,  
the heathen with their hands.  
That they may rue  
when they their end  
shall behold hereafter.

. . . . .

He on the tree ascended  
and shed his blood,  
God on the cross  
through his Spirit's power.  
Wherefore we should  
at all times  
give to the Lord thanks  
in deeds and works  
for that he us from thralldom  
led home  
up to Heaven,  
where we may share  
the greatness of God." <sup>1</sup>



Specimen pages (reduced size) of  
Four Old ANGLO-SAXON PSALTERS. Date about A.D. 800.



[Facing page 48.]

§ 2. About the time of Cædmon's death, early in the eighth century, the learned Eadhelm, bishop of Sherborne, was working in Glastonbury Abbey translating the Psalms of David into Anglo-Saxon, and at his request, it is said, Egbert, bishop of Holy Island, completed about the same time a version of the Gospels, of which a copy is still preserved in the British Museum.

§ 3. But the names of Eadhelm and Egbert are overshadowed by that of a contemporary far greater than either.

It was a calm peaceful evening in the spring of 735—the evening of Ascension Day—and in his quiet cell in the monastery of Jarrow an aged monk lay dying. With laboured utterance he tried to dictate to his scribe, while a group of fair-haired Saxon youths stood sorrowfully by, with tears beseeching their “dear master” to rest.

That dying monk was the most famous scholar of his day in Western Europe. Through him Jarrow-on-the-Tyne had become the great centre of literature and science, hundreds of eager students crowding yearly to its halls to learn of the famous Bæda. He was deeply versed in the literature of Greece and Rome—he had written on medicine, and astronomy, and rhetoric, and most of the other known sciences of the time—his “Ecclesiastical History” is still the chief source of our knowledge of ancient England;—but none of his studies were to him equal to the

study of religion, none of his books of the same importance as his commentaries and sermons on Scripture. Even then as he lay on his deathbed he was feebly dictating to his scribe a translation of St. John's Gospel. "I don't want my boys to read a lie," he said, "or to work to no purpose after I am gone."

And those "boys" seem to have dearly loved the gentle old man. An epistle has come down to us from his disciple Cuthbert to a "fellow-reader" Cuthwin, telling of what had happened this Ascension Day. "Our father and master, whom God loved," he says, "had translated the Gospel of St. John as far as 'what are these among so many,' when the day came before Our Lord's Ascension.

"He began then to suffer much in his breath, and a swelling came in his feet, but he went on dictating to his scribe. 'Go on quickly,' he said, 'I know not how long I shall hold out, or how soon my Master will call me hence.'

"All night long he lay awake in thanksgiving, and when the Ascension Day dawned, he commanded us to write with all speed what he had begun."

Thus the letter goes on affectionately, describing the working and resting right through the day till the evening came, and then, with the setting sun gilding the windows of his cell, the old man lay feebly dictating the closing words.

"There remains but one chapter, master," said

the anxious scribe, "but it seems very hard for you to speak."

"Nay, it is easy," Bede replied; "take up thy pen and write quickly."

Amid blinding tears the young scribe wrote on. "And now, father," said he, as he eagerly caught the last words from his quivering lips, "only one sentence remains." Bede dictated it.

"It is finished, master!" cried the youth, raising his head as the last word was written.

"Ay, it is finished!" echoed the dying saint; "lift me up, place me at that window of my cell where I have so often prayed to God. Now glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost!" and with these words the beautiful spirit passed to the presence of the Eternal Trinity.

§ 4. Our next translator is no less a person than King Alfred the Great, whose patriotic wish has been so often quoted, "that all the freeborn youth of his kingdom should employ themselves on nothing till they could first read well the English Scripture."<sup>1</sup>

A striking monument of his zeal for the Bible remains in the beginning of his Laws of England. The document is headed "Alfred's Dooms," and begins thus: "The dooms which the Almighty Himself spake to Moses, and gave him to keep, and after our Saviour

<sup>1</sup> At least so it is quoted, though the last words "*Englisc ge-writ arædan*" quite as probably mean "to read English *writing*." See Eadie's *Bibl. Hist.*, i. 13.

Christ came to earth, He said He came not to break or forbid, but to keep them." And then follow the Ten Commandments, in the forcible simple Anglo-Saxon terms, the first part of the ancient laws of England:—

Drihten wæs sprecende thæs  
word to Moyse and thus cwæth :

Ic eam Drihten thy God. Ic the  
sit gelædde of Aegypta londe and  
of heora theowdome.

Ne lufa thu othre fremde  
godas ofer me.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ara thinum fæder and thinre  
meder tha the Drihten sealde the,  
that thu sy thy leng libbende on  
eorthan.

Ne slea thu.

Ne stala thu.

Ne lige thu dearnunga.

Ne sæge thu lease gewitnesse  
with thinum nehstan.

Ne wilna thu thines nehstan  
yifes mid unrihte.

Ne wyrc thu the gyldene godas  
on the seolfrene.

*Lord was speaking these words  
to Moses and thus said :*

*I am the Lord thy God. I led  
thee out of the land of Egypt and  
its thralldom.*

*Love thou not other strange  
gods over me.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Honour thy father and thy  
mother whom the Lord gave thee,  
that thou be long living on earth.*

*Slay not thou.*

*Steal not thou.*

*Commit not thou adultery.*

*Say not thou false witness  
against thy neighbour.*

*Desire not thou thy neighbour's  
inheritance with unright.*

*Work not thou thee golden gods  
or silvern.*

Here is the Lord's Prayer of King Alfred's time:—

Uren Fader dhic art in heofnas,

*Our Father which art in heaven,*

Sic gehalged dhin noma,

*Hallowed be thy name,*

To cymedh dhin ric,  
*Come thy kingdom,*  
Sic dhin uuilla sue is in heofnas and in eardho,  
*Be thy will so as in heaven and in earth,*  
Vren hlaf ofer uuirthe sel vs to daeg,  
*Our loaf supersubstantial give us to-day,*  
And forgef us scylda urna,  
*And forgive us our debts,*  
Sue uue forgefan sculdgun vrum,  
*So as we forgive our debts,*  
And no inleadh vridk in costnung al gefrig  
*And not inlead us into temptation but deliver*  
vrich from ifle.  
*every one from evil.*

It is interesting, as showing the growth of the English language, to compare this with the Lord's Prayer of 300 years afterwards:—

Fader oure that art in heve,  
I-halgeed be thi nome,  
I-cume thi kinereiche,  
Y-worthe thi wylle also is in hevene so be on erthe,  
Our iche-days-bred gif us to-day,  
And forgif us oure gultes,  
Also we forgifet oure gultare,

Christ came to earth, He said He came not to break or forbid, but to keep them." And then follow the Ten Commandments, in the forcible simple Anglo-Saxon terms, the first part of the ancient laws of England:—

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godas ofer me.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ara thinum fæder and thinre  
meder tha the Drihten sealde the,  
that thu sy thy leng libbende on  
eorþan.

Ne slea thu.

Ne stala thu.

Ne lige thu dearnunga.

Ne sæge thu lease gewitnesse  
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Ne wyrç thu the gyldene godas  
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\* \* \* \* \*

*Honour thy father and thy  
mother whom the Lord gave thee,  
that thou be long living on earth.*

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Y-worthe thi wyll also is in hevene so be on erthe,  
Our iche-days-bred gif us to-day,  
And forgif us oure gultes,  
Also we forgifet oure gultare,

And ne led ows nowth into fondyngge,  
Auth ales ows of harme,  
So be hit.

Alfred also engaged in a translation of the Psalms, which, with the Gospels, seemed the favourite Scriptures of the people; but, unlike his great predecessor, Bede, he died before his task was finished.

§ 5. Archbishop Ælfric, and a few other translators, appear about the close of the tenth century, but there is no need of describing their works in detail. As far as we can judge from the existing manuscripts, most of these early Bible translations were intended for reading in the churches to the people, and their simple expressive terms made them very easily understood. For example, a centurion was a "hundred-man," a disciple a "leorning knight," or "learning youth;" "the man with the dropsy," is translated as "the water-seoc-man," the Sabbath as "the reste daeg" (rest day), and the woman who put her mites in the treasury, is said to have cast them into the "gold-hoard."<sup>1</sup>

The following specimen interestingly exhibits the connection of this old Saxon with our modern English, the translation being worded with a view to preserving the similarity.

<sup>1</sup> See Forshall and Madden's Anglo-Saxon Gospels.

## ST. MATT. vii. 26, 27.

And aelc thaera the gehyrath thas mine word  
*And each of them that ge-heareth these mine words*  
and tha ne wyrcth                      se bith gelic tham  
*and that not worketh (them) he beeth ge-like that*  
dysigan              man tha getimbrode hys hus ofer  
*foolish (dizzy) man that timbered his house over*  
sand-ceosel. Tha rinde hyt and thaer comun flod  
*sand-gravel. Then rained it and there come flood*  
and bleowun windas and ahruron on that hus, and  
*and blew winds and rushed on that house, and*  
that hus feoll and hys hryre wæs mycel.  
*that house fell and his fall was mickle.*

## CHAPTER V.

### *WYCLIFFE'S VERSION.*

§ 1. Growth of the Language. § 2. The Parish Priest of Lutterworth. § 3. His Death. § 4. The Wycliffe Version. § 5. Results of his Work.

§ 1 AFTER the early Anglo-Saxon versions comes a long pause in the history of Bible translation. Amid the disturbance resulting from the Danish invasion there was little time for thinking of translations and manuscripts; and before the land had fully regained its quiet the fatal battle of Hastings had been fought, and England lay helpless at the Normans' feet. The higher Saxon clergy were replaced by the priests of Normandy, who had little sympathy with the people over whom they came, and the Saxon manuscripts were contemptuously flung aside as relics of a rude barbarism. The contempt shown to the language of the defeated race quite destroyed the impulse to English translation, and the Norman clergy had no sympathy with the desire for spreading the knowledge of the Scriptures among the people, so that for centuries those Scriptures remained in England a "spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

Yet this time must not be considered altogether lost, for during those centuries England was becoming fitted for an English Bible. The future language of the nation was being formed; the Saxon and Norman French were struggling side by side; gradually the old Saxon grew unintelligible to the people; gradually the French became a foreign tongue, and with the fusion of the two races a language grew up which was the language of united England.<sup>1</sup>

§ 2. Passing, then, from the quiet deathbeds of Alfred and Bede, we transfer ourselves to the great hall of the Blackfriars' Monastery, London, on a dull, warm May day in 1378, amid purple robes and gowns of satin and

<sup>1</sup> "In tracing the history of the change from Anglo-Saxon to modern English it is impossible to assign any precise dates by which we can mark the origin of this change, or the principal epochs of its progress, or its completion. This necessarily results from the very gradual nature of the change itself; we might as well ask at what moment a child becomes a youth, or a youth a man; or when the plant becomes a tree. So gradual was the change, that, to adopt the language of Hallam, 'When we compare the earliest English of the thirteenth century with the Anglo-Saxon of the twelfth, it seems hard to pronounce why it should pass for a separate language rather than a modification and simplification of the former.' Still, for the sake of convenience, we may fix on certain dates somewhere about which the change commenced or was effected. About 1150, or a little less than a century after the Conquest, may be dated the decline of pure Saxon; about 1250, or a century later, the commencement of English. During the intervening century the language has been called by many of our writers semi-Saxon."—*H. Rogers in Edinburgh Review*, Oct. 1850.

It was towards the end of the fourteenth century that English began to be the language of literature. "Sir John Mandeville's Travels," one of the earliest English books, appeared in 1356, and Chaucer wrote towards the close of the century; therefore Wycliffe's Bible in 1383 was about as early as a version could be which was to retain its place among the English people.

damask, amid monks and abbots, and bishops and doctors of the Church, assembled for the trial of John Wycliffe, the parish priest of Lutterworth.

The great hall, crowded to its heavy oaken doors, witnesses to the interest that is centred in the trial, and all eyes are fixed on the pale stern old man who stands before the dais silently facing his judges. He is quite alone, and his thoughts go back, with some bitterness, to his previous trial, when the people crowded the doors shouting for their favourite, and John of Gaunt and the Lord Marshal of England were standing by his side. He has learned since then not to put his trust in princes. The power of his enemies has rapidly grown, even the young King has been won over to their cause, and patrons and friends have drawn back from his side, whom the Church has resolved to crush.

The judges have taken their seats, and the accused stands awaiting the charges to be read, when suddenly there is a quick cry of terror. A strange rumbling sound fills the air, and the walls of the judgment-hall are trembling to their base—the monastery and the city of London are being shaken by an earthquake! Friar and prelate grow pale with superstitious awe. Twice already has the arraignment of Wycliffe been strangely interrupted. Are the elements in league with this enemy of the Church? Shall they give up the trial?

“No!” thunders Archbishop Courtenay, rising in his place, “we shall not give up the trial. This earthquake but portends the purging of the kingdom; for as there are in the bowels of the earth noxious vapours which

only by a violent earthquake can be purged away, so are these evils brought by such men upon this land which only by a very earthquake can ever be removed. Let the trial go forward!"

What think you, reader, were the evils which this pale ascetic had wrought, needing a very earthquake to cleanse them from the land? Had he falsified the Divine Message to the people in his charge? Was he turning men's hearts from the worship of God? Was his priestly office disgraced by carelessness or drunkenness or impurity of life?

Oh no. Such faults could be gently judged at the tribunal in the Blackfriars' Hall. Wycliffe's was a far more serious crime. He had dared to attack the corruptions of the Church, and especially the enormities of the begging friars—he had indignantly denounced Pardons and Indulgences and Masses for the soul as part of a system of gigantic fraud; and worst of all, he had filled up the cup of his iniquity by translating the Scriptures into the English tongue, "making it," as one of the chroniclers<sup>1</sup> angrily complains, "common and more open to laymen and to women than it was wont to be to clerks well learned and of good understanding, so that the pearl of the Gospel is trodden under foot of swine."

The feeling of his opponents will be better understood if we notice the position of the Church in England at the time. The meridian of her power had been already passed. Her clergy as a class were

<sup>1</sup> Kneighton.

ignorant and corrupt. Her people were neglected, except for the money to be extorted by Masses and Pardons, "as if," to quote the words of an old writer, "God had given His sheep not be pastured but to be shaven and shorn." This state of things had gone on for centuries, and the people like dumb driven cattle had submitted. But those who could discern the signs of the times must have seen now that it could not go on much longer. The spread of education was rapidly increasing, several new colleges having been founded in Oxford during Wycliffe's lifetime. A strong spirit of independence, too, was rising among the people—already Edward III. and his Parliament had indignantly refused the Pope's demand for the annual tribute to be sent to Rome. It was evident that a crisis was near. And, as if to hasten the crisis, the famous schism of the Papacy had placed two Popes at the head of the Church, and all Christendom was scandalised by the sight of the rival "vicars of Jesus Christ" anathematising each other from Rome and Avignon, raising armies and slaughtering helpless women and children, each for the aggrandising of himself.

The minds of men in England were greatly agitated, and Wycliffe felt that at such a time the firmest charter of the Church would be the open Bible in her children's hands; the best exposure of the selfish policy of her rulers, the exhibiting to the people the beautiful self-forgetting life of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Gospels. "The Sacred Scriptures," he said, "are the property of the people, and one which no one should

be allowed to wrest from them. . . . Christ and His apostles converted the world by making known the Scriptures to men in a form familiar to them, . . . and I pray with all my heart that through doing the things contained in this book we may all together come to the everlasting life." This Bible translation he placed far the first in importance of all his attempts to reform the English Church, and he pursued his object with a vigour and against an opposition that reminds one of the old monk of Bethlehem and his Bible a thousand years before.

The result of the Blackfriars' Synod was, that after three days' deliberation Wycliffe's teaching was condemned, and at a subsequent meeting he himself was excommunicated. He returned to his quiet parsonage at Lutterworth—for his enemies dared not yet proceed to extremities—and there, with his pile of old Latin manuscripts and commentaries, he laboured on at the great work of his life, till the whole Bible was translated into the "modir tonge," and England received for the first time in her history a complete version of the Scriptures<sup>1</sup> in the language of the people.

<sup>1</sup> This honour has by some been denied to Wycliffe, chiefly on the authority of Sir Thomas More. "Ye schall understande," he says, "that y<sup>e</sup> great arch heretike John Wycliffe, whereas y<sup>e</sup> Holy Bible was long before his dayes by vertuous and well lerned men translated into y<sup>e</sup> Engliche tong and by good and godly people with devotion and soberness well and reverently read, tooke upon him of malicious purpose to translate it anew. In whiche translacioun he purposely corrupted y<sup>e</sup> Holy Text, maliciously planting therein such wordes as might in y<sup>e</sup> reders' eres serve to the profe of such heresies as he was aboute to sowe. . . . Myself haue seen and can shew you Bibles fayre

§ 3. And scarce was his task well finished when, like his great predecessor Bede, the brave old priest laid down his life. He himself had expected that a violent death would have finished his course. His enemies were many and powerful; the primate, the king, and the Pope were against him, with the friars, whom he had so often and so fiercely defied;<sup>1</sup> so that his destruction seemed but a mere question of time. But while his enemies were preparing to strike, the old man "was not, for God took him."

It was the close of the Old Year, the last Sunday of 1384, and his little flock at Lutterworth were kneeling in hushed reverence before the altar, when suddenly, at the time of the elevation of the Sacrament, he fell to the ground in a violent fit of the palsy, and never spoke again until his death on the last day of the year.

In him England lost one of her best and greatest

and olde, written in Engliche, which have been known and seen by y<sup>e</sup> bischop of y<sup>e</sup> dyoces and left in lemen's hands and women's."

However, he gives us no means of testing his statement, and the fullest investigation gives no trace of anything but separate fragments of Scripture before Wycliffe's time. Perhaps Sir Thomas More had seen some of Wycliffe's own copies, and mistook them for the work of another and earlier writer, or more probably the statement was made hastily and without proper foundation. A few partial translations had been accomplished in the century before Wycliffe by Scorham, Rolle of Hampole, and others, but they were little known. Wycliffe's great complaint is that there is no English translation of the Scriptures.

<sup>1</sup> The scene has frequently been described of the friars pressing round what seemed the death-bed of their old assailant, adjuring him to recant and receive their absolution, and the stern old man raising himself suddenly to startle them with his fierce prophetic cry, "I shall not die, but live to declare again the evil deeds of the friars!"

sons, a patriot sternly resenting all dishonour to his country, a reformer who ventured his life for the purity of the Church and the freedom of the Bible—an earnest, faithful “parson of a country town,” standing out conspicuously among the clergy of the time,

“For Cristè’s lore and his apostles twelve  
He taughte—and first he folwede it himselve.”

Here is a choice specimen from one of the monkish writers of the time describing his death:—“On the feast of the passion of St. Thomas of Canterbury, John Wycliffe, the organ of the devil, the enemy of the Church, the idol of heretics, the image of hypocrites, the restorer of schism, the storehouse of lies, the sink of flattery, being struck by the horrible judgment of God, was seized with the palsy throughout his whole body, and that mouth which was to have spoken huge things against God and His saints, and holy Church, was miserably drawn aside, and afforded a frightful spectacle to beholders; his tongue was speechless and his head shook, showing plainly that the curse which God had thundered forth against Cain was also inflicted on him.”<sup>1</sup>

Some time after his death a petition was presented to the Pope, which to his honour he rejected, praying him to order Wycliffe’s body to be taken out of consecrated ground and buried in a dunghill. But forty years after, by a decree of the Council of Constance, the

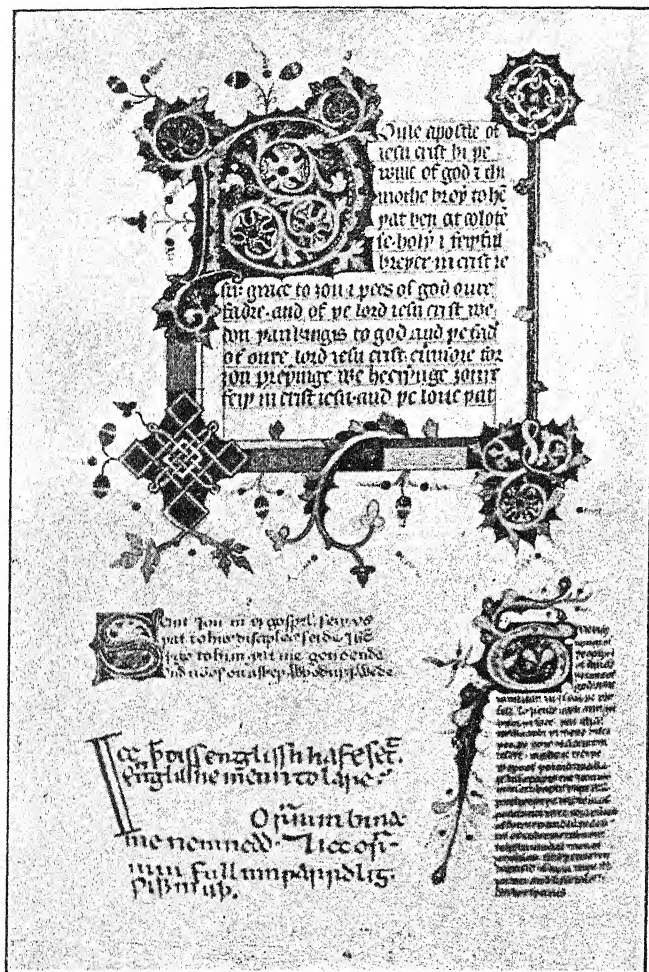
<sup>1</sup> Lewis’s “Life of Wycliffe.”

old Reformer's bones were dug up and burnt, and the ashes flung into the little river Swift, which "runneth hard by his church at Lutterworth." And so, in the often-quoted words of old Fuller, "as the Swift bare them into the Severn, and the Severn into the narrow seas, and they again into the ocean, thus the ashes of Wycliffe is an emblem of his doctrine, which is now dispersed over all the world."

§ 4. But it is with his Bible translation that we are specially concerned. As far as we can learn, the whole Bible was not translated by the Reformer. About half the Old Testament is ascribed to Nicholas de Hereford,<sup>1</sup> one of the Oxford leaders of the Lollards, the remainder, with the whole of the New Testament, being done by Wycliffe himself. About eight years after its completion the whole was revised by Richard Purvey, his curate and intimate friend, whose manuscript is still in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. Purvey's preface is a most interesting old document, and shows not only

<sup>1</sup> He appears to have stopped abruptly in the middle of the verse (Baruch iii. 20), probably at the time of his seizure for heresy. Here is a specimen of his translation, Psalm xxiii. :—"The Lord gouerneth me and no thing to me shal lacke; in the place of leswe where he me ful sette. Ouer watir of fulfilling he nurshide me; my soule he conuertide. He broghte down upon me the sties of rightwiseness; for his name. For whi and if I shal go in the myddel of the shadewe of deth; I shal not dreden euelis, for thou art with me. Thi yerde and thi staf; the han confortid me. Thou hast maad redi in thi sighte a bord; aghen them that trublyn me. Thou hast myche fatted in oile myn hed and my chalis makende ful drunken, hou right cler it is. And thi mercy shall vnderfolewe me; alle the dayis of my lif. And that I dwelle in the hous of the Lord in to the lengthe of dayis."

Specimen pages (reduced size) of  
Four EARLY ENGLISH BIBLE Manuscripts.





that he was deeply in earnest about his work, but that he thoroughly understood the intellectual and moral conditions necessary for its success.

"A simpel creature," he says, "hath translated the Scripture out of Latin into Engliche. First, this simpel creature had much travayle with divers fellows and helpers to gather many old Bibles and other doctors and glosses to make one Latin Bible some deal true and then to study it anew the texte and any other help he might get, especially Lyra on the Old Testament, which helped him much with this work. The third time to counsel with olde grammarians and old divines of hard words and hard sentences how they might best be understood and translated, the fourth time to translate as clearly as he could to the sense, and to have many good fellows and cunnyng at the correcting of the translacioun. . . . A translator hath great nede to studie well the sense both before and after, and then also he hath nede to live a clene life and be full devout in preiers, and have not his wit occupied about worldli things that the Holy Spyrit author of all wisdom and cunnyng and truthe dresse him for his work and suffer him not to err." And he concludes with the prayer, "God grant to us all grace to ken well and to kepe well Holie Writ, and to suffer joiefulli some paine for it at the laste."

Like all the earlier English translations, Wycliffe's Bible was based on the Latin Vulgate of St. Jerome; and this is the great defect in his work, as compared with the versions that followed. He was not capable of

consulting the original Greek and Hebrew even if he had access to them—in fact, there was probably no man in England at the time capable of doing so; and therefore, though he represents the Latin faithfully and well, he of course handed on its errors as faithfully as its perfections. But, such as it is, it is a fine specimen of fourteenth century English. He translated not for scholars or for nobles, but for the plain people, and his style was such as suited those for whom he wrote—plain, vigorous, homely, and yet with all its homeliness full of a solemn grace and dignity, which made men feel that they were reading no ordinary book. He uses many striking expressions, such as 2 Tim. ii. 4, “No man holding knighthood to God, wlapppith himself with worldli nedes;” and many of the best-known phrases in our present Bible originated with him, *e.g.*, “the beame and the mote,” “the depe thingis of God,” “strait is the gate and narewe is the waye,” “no but a man schall be born againe,” “the cuppe of blessing which we blessen,” &c. &c.

Here is a specimen from Wycliffe's Gospels, and it will be an interesting illustration of the growth of our language to compare it, on the one hand, with the specimens 400 years earlier given in the previous chapter, and on the other with the present Revised Version, which is later in date by 500 years. The resemblance to the latter will be still more marked if the sound only is followed, disregarding the spelling. It is somewhere recorded that at a meeting in Yorkshire recently a long passage of Wycliffe's Bible was

read, which was quite intelligible throughout to those who heard.

MATT. III. 1-6.—In thilke dayes came Ioon Baptist prechyng in the desert of Jude, sayng, Do ye penaunce: for the kyngdom of heuens shall neigh. Forsothe this is he of whom it is said by Esaye the prophete, A voice of a cryng in desert, Make ye redy the wayes of the Lord, make ye rightful the pathes of hym. Forsothe that ilke Ioon hadde cloth of the heeris of cameylis and a girdil of skyn about his leendis; sothely his mete weren locustis and hony of the wode. Thanne Jerusalem wente out to hym, and al Jude, and al the cuntre aboute Jordan, and thei weren crystened of hym in Jordan, knowlechyng there synnes.

It will be seen that this specimen is not divided into verses. Verse division belongs to a much later period,<sup>1</sup> and though convenient for reference, it sometimes a good deal spoils the sense. The division into

<sup>1</sup> It first appears in the Geneva Bible, 1560. See pp. 102-3. We owe it to Robert Stephen, the celebrated editor of the Greek Testament, who hurriedly arranged it on a journey from Paris to Lyons. "I think," a commentator quaintly remarks, "it had been better done on his knees in the closet."

chapters appears in Wycliffe's as in our own Bibles. This chapter division had shortly before been made by a Cardinal Hugo, for the purpose of a Latin Concordance, and its convenience brought it quickly into use. But, like the verse division, it is often very badly done, the object aimed at seeming to be uniformity of length rather than any natural division of the subject.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes a chapter breaks off in the middle of a narrative or an argument, and, especially in St. Paul's epistles, the incorrect division often becomes misleading. The removal as far as possible of these divisions is one of the advantages of the Revised Version to be noticed later on.

§ 5. The book had a very wide circulation. While the Anglo-Saxon versions were confined for the most part to the few religious houses where they were written, Wycliffe's Bible, in spite of its disadvantage of being only manuscript, was circulated largely through the kingdom; and though the cost a good deal restricted its possession to the wealthier classes,<sup>2</sup> those who could

<sup>1</sup> Compare, for example, the beginnings of Matt. x., xx.; Mark iii., ix.; Luke xxi.; Acts viii.; 1 Cor. xi.; 2 Cor. v., vii., &c. &c. An awkward division for a clergyman reading the lessons is at end of Acts xxi., where, however he may manage his voice, it is difficult to avoid reading, "Paul spake in the Hebrew tongue, saying, Here endeth the second lesson." The Irish Church Lectionary has altered this lesson.

<sup>2</sup> Even now, after 500 years, one hundred and seventy of these copies remain, some of them of great interest from the inscriptions on their title-pages. One bears the name of Henry VI., another of Richard, the crookbacked Duke of Gloucester, others belonged to Henry VII. and Edward VI., and one has an inscription telling that it was presented to Queen Elizabeth as a birthday gift by one of her chaplains.

not hope to possess it gained access to it too, as well through their own efforts as through the ministrations of Wycliffe's "pore priestes." A considerable sum was paid for even a few sheets of the manuscript, a load of hay was given for permission to read it for a certain period one hour a day,<sup>1</sup> and those who could not afford even such expenses adopted what means they could. It is touching to read such incidents as that of one Alice Collins, sent for to the little gatherings "to recite the ten commandments and parts of the Epistles of SS. Paul and Peter, which she knew by heart." "Certes," says old John Foxe in his "Book of Martyrs," "the zeal of those Christian days seems much superior to this of our day, and to see the travail of them may well shame our careless times."

But it was at a terrible risk such study was carried on. The appearance of Wycliffe's Bible aroused at once

<sup>1</sup> The readers, as might be expected, often surreptitiously copying portions of special interest. One is reminded of the story in ancient Irish history of a curious decision arising out of an incident of this kind nearly a thousand years before, which seems to have influenced the history of Christianity in Britain. St. Columb, on a visit to the aged St. Finian in Ulster, had permission to read in the Psalter belonging to his host. But every night while the good old saint was sleeping, the young one was busy in the chapel writing by a miraculous light till he had completed a copy of the whole Psalter. The owner of the Psalter discovering this, demanded that it should be given up, as it had been copied unlawfully from his book; while the copyist insisted that, the materials and labour being his, he was entitled to what he had written. The dispute was referred to Diarmad the king at Tara, and his decision (genuinely Irish) was given in St. Finian's favour. "To every book," said he, "belongs its son-book (copy), as to every cow belongs her calf." Columb complained of the decision as unjust, and the dispute is said to have been one of the causes of his leaving Ireland for Iona (see note, p. 43).

fierce opposition. A bill was brought into Parliament to forbid the circulation of the Scriptures in English; but the sturdy John of Gaunt vigorously asserted the right of the people to have the Word of God in their own tongue; "for why," said he, "are we to be the dross of the nations?" However, the rulers of the Church grew more and more alarmed at the circulation of the book. At length Archbishop Arundel, a zealous but not very learned prelate, complained to the Pope of "that pestilent wretch, John Wycliffe, the son of the old Serpent, the forerunner of Antichrist, who had completed his iniquity by inventing a new translation of the Scriptures;" and shortly after the Convocation of Canterbury forbade such translations, under penalty of the major excommunication.<sup>1</sup>

"God grant us," runs the prayer in the old Bible preface, "to ken and to kepe well Holie Writ, and to suffer joiefulli some paine for it at the laste." What a meaning that prayer must have gained when the readers of the book were burned with the copies round their necks, when men and women were executed for teaching their children the Lord's Prayer and ten commandments in

<sup>1</sup> Their reasons were worthy of the enlightened Archbishop who was at their head. "It is a dangerous thing, as witnesseth blessed St. Jerome, to translate the text of the Scripture out of one tongue into another, for in the translation the sense is not always easily kept. We therefore decree and ordain that no man hereafter by his own authority translate any text of the Scripture into English or any other tongue by way of book, pamphlet, or treatise, and that no man read any such book, pamphlet, or treatise now lately composed in the time of John Wycliffe, or hereafter to be set forth, under pain of the major excommunication, until the said translation be approved by the ordinary of the place or the Council Provincial."

English, when husbands were made to witness against their wives, and children forced to light the death-fires of their parents, and possessors of the banned Wycliffe Bible were hunted down as if they were wild beasts.

Thus did Wycliffe, in his effort for the spread of the Gospel of Peace, bring, like his Master fourteen centuries before, "not peace but a sword." Every bold attempt to let in the light on long-standing darkness seems to result first in a fierce opposition from the evil creatures that delight in the darkness, and the weak creatures weakened by dwelling in it so long. It is not till the driving back of the evil and the strengthening of the weak, as the light gradually wins its way, that the true results can be seen. It is, to use a simile of a graceful modern writer,<sup>1</sup> as when you raise with your staff an old flat stone, with the grass forming a little hedge, as it were, around it as it lies. "Beneath it, what a revelation! Blades of grass flattened down, colourless, matted together, as if they had been bleached and ironed; hideous crawling things; black crickets with their long filaments sticking out on all sides; motionless, slug-like creatures; young larvæ, perhaps more horrible in their pulpy stillness than in the infernal wriggle of maturity. But no sooner is the stone turned and the wholesome light of day let in on this compressed and blinded community of creeping things than all of them that have legs rush blindly about, butting against each other and everything else in their way,

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Wendell Holmes, in the "Autocrat of the Breakfast-table."

and end in a general stampede to underground retreats from the region poisoned by sunshine. Next year you will find the grass growing fresh and green where the stone lay—the ground bird builds her nest where the beetle had his hole, the dandelion and the buttercup are growing there, and the broad fans of insect-angels open and shut over their golden discs as the rhythmic waves of blissful consciousness pulsate through their glorified being.

“The stone is ancient error, the grass is human nature borne down and bleached of all its colour by it, the shapes that are found beneath are the crafty beings that thrive in the darkness and the weak organisations kept helpless by it. He who turns the stone is whosoever puts the staff of truth to the old lying incubus, whether he do it with a serious face or a laughing one. The next year stands for the coming time. Then shall the nature which had lain blanched and broken rise in its full stature and native lines in the sunshine. Then shall God’s minstrels build their nests in the hearts of a new-born humanity. Then shall beauty—divinity taking outline and colour—light upon the souls of men as the butterfly, image of the beatified spirit rising from the dust, soars from the shell that held a poor grub, which would never have found wings unless that stone had been lifted.”

## CHAPTER VI.

### TYNDALE'S VERSION.

§ 1. Printing. § 2. Revival of Greek Learning. § 3. Tyndale's Work. § 4. Reception of the Book in England. § 5. Death of Tyndale. § 6. Description of Tyndale's Version.

§ 1. AFTER Wycliffe there is an interval of a hundred years before we come to the next great version of the Bible, but in that interval occurred what more than any other event that ever happened has affected the history of the English Bible, and indeed the history of the English nation altogether. Up to this time in wild Iona, in the monasteries of ancient Britain, in the great homes of learning through the continent of Europe, men and women sat in the silence of their cells slowly copying out letter by letter the pages of the Scripture manuscripts, watching patiently month after month the volumes grow beneath their hands. But with Wycliffe's days this toilsome manuscript period closes for ever.

About twenty years after the death of Wycliffe there was living in the old German town of Mentz a boy bearing the not very attractive name of Johann Gensfleisch, which means, put into plain English, John Gooseflesh. One morning—so runs the story—he had

been cutting the letters of his name out of the bark of a tree, and having been left alone in the house soon after, amused himself by spreading out the letters on a board so as to form again the words,

### **Johann Gensfleisch.**

A pot of purple dye was beside the fire, and by some awkward turn one of his letters dropped into it. Quickly, without stopping to think, he snatched it out of the boiling liquid, and as quickly let it drop again, this time on a white dressed skin which lay on a bench near by, the result being a beautiful purple **h** on a deep yellowish white ground. Whether the boy admired the beautiful marks on the skin or meditated ruefully of future marks on his own skin as a possible consequence history does not record, but it would seem as if somehow that image rooted itself in his mind, to bear rich fruit on a future day. For, thirty years afterward, when all Germany was ringing with the name of Johann Gutenberg and his magical art of printing, the good people of Mentz recognised in the inventor their young townsman Gensfleisch, who had meantime taken his maternal name.<sup>1</sup> Whatever truth there may be in the legend, certain it is that Gutenberg's printing press was working in Mentz about the year 1450, and the first completed book that issued from that press is said to have been the Latin Bible.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He was the son of Frilo Gensfleisch and Elsie Gutenberg. The German law recognised in certain cases this taking of the maternal name.

<sup>2</sup> It is known as the Mazarin Bible, from the fact that a copy of it was found about a century ago in Cardinal Mazarin's library at Paris.

This is not the place to tell what has been so often told already of the immense influence of this new invention on the progress of knowledge in the world. We have but to do with its effects as manifested in the history of the Bible, and for this it will be sufficient to remark that the Bible which took Wycliffe's copyists ten months to prepare can now be produced by a single London firm at the rate of 120 per hour, that is, two copies every minute; while, for cost of production, we may compare the Wycliffe Bible at a price equal to £40 of our money,<sup>1</sup> with a New Testament complete in paper covers that has lately been published for one penny!

§ 2. Another event of the same period of very great importance in our Bible history was the revival of Greek learning in Europe. The reader will remember that up to this time our pile of "ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS" remains untouched, the English Scriptures being translated not from the original Greek and Hebrew, but from the Latin Vulgate, which itself, as we have seen, was only a translation.<sup>2</sup> For many centuries Greek was practically unknown in Western Europe, but about this time gradually the study was revived. "Greece," it has been finely said, "rose from the grave with the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Froude ("Hist. Eng.") has some interesting pages to show the value of money in those days. A pig or a goose was bought for 4d., a chicken for 1d., a hen for 2d.; land was let at 8d. per acre; labourers were hired at 1d. per day; the stipend of a parish priest was £5, 6s. 8d. a year; and Bradford, the martyr, writes of his fellowship at Oxford, "It is worth £7 a year to me, so you see what a good lord God is to me."

<sup>2</sup> See Diagram facing title-page.

New Testament in her hand," and before the close of the sixteenth century the "new learning" had become an important part of university education in Europe.

§ 3. At this critical period came forth the man who was to use these new powers with such marvellous effect in the service of the English Bible. In 1483, the year after the birth of Luther, and a hundred years after the death of Wycliffe, William Tyndale was born. He grew up a thoughtful studious youth, and at an early age won for himself in Oxford a distinguished position for scholarship. Soon afterwards he moved to Cambridge, where he met with Erasmus, the greatest Greek scholar of the day, who had just completed his Greek Testament from a comparison of some ancient manuscripts. Tyndale quickly made himself familiar with this wonderful new book. He took it up probably at first as a curious work of scholarship, but he soon found that there was more in it than this; and like his great contemporary Luther, and almost at the same time, he read again and again with ever deepening interest the wondrous revelation of the love of God to man, till his spirit was stirred to its depths. He could not keep his treasure to himself. He argued with the priests, and exhorted them to the study of the Scriptures for themselves; and it was about this time that one day, in the sudden heat of controversy, he startled all around by his memorable declaration, whose fulfilment was afterward the object of his life. "We had better," said his opponent, "be without God's laws than the Pope's."

And Tyndale rose in his indignant wrath. "I defy the Pope," he cried, "and all his laws; and if God spare me I will one day make the boy that drives the plough in England to know more of Scripture than the Pope does."<sup>1</sup>

He had already translated some portions from the original Greek, and now, encouraged by the report he had heard of him as a patron of learning, he applied confidently to Cuthbert Tonstal, Bishop of London, for permission to carry on his work in the episcopal palace under his lordship's patronage. But translation of classical authors was a very different thing from translation of the Scriptures, and the bishop chillingly replied that there was no room in the palace for carrying on such a work. However, he was kindly received by Humphrey Monmouth, a London merchant, and in his house for nearly a year he assiduously, though very quietly, prosecuted his task.

But that year of contact with the ecclesiastics of the city plainly showed him that no mercy would be extended to any movement which disturbed their quiet. He saw men around him led to prison and to death for possessing or reading a copy of Luther's writings, and he knew well that a Bible translation would be a still more dangerous book. "Wherefore," he sadly says, "I perceived that not only in my lord of London's palace,

<sup>1</sup> An edition of Tyndale's Testament, prepared during his imprisonment, is sometimes spoken of as the literal fulfilment of this vow—a Testament for the ploughboys of his native county. It contains words seemingly of a provincial dialect—*faether*, *maester*, *sloene*, *oones*, *whorse*, &c. Most probably, however, these peculiarities are due to a Flemish proof-reader.

but in all England, there was no room for attempting a translation of the Scriptures."<sup>1</sup>

Tyndale was not one of those who, having put their hands to the plough, look back. He had determined that England should have the Word of God spread among her people by means of this new invention of printing, and he had calmly counted the cost. If his work could be done in England, well. If not—if only a life of exile could accomplish it—then that life of exile he would cheerfully accept. So in 1524 he left his native land, never to see it again; and at Hamburg, in poverty and distress, and amid constant danger, the brave-hearted exile worked at his translation,<sup>2</sup> and so diligently that the following year we find him at Cologne with the sheets of his quarto New Testament already in the printer's hands.

But a sad disappointment was in store for him. He had kept his secret well, and he hoped that in a few months more the little book would be spreading in thousands through the length and breadth of England. But just as his hopes were highest, one day there came to him a hurried message at his lodgings, and half distracted he rushed to the printer's house, seized all the sheets he could lay hands on, and fled from the town. A priest named Cochlaeus had heard an idle boast of

<sup>1</sup> Tyndale's Preface.

<sup>2</sup> He seems to have had no help in the translation. For correcting proofs and such work he had one Friar Roye, whom he rather humorously describes. "As long as he had no money I could somewhat rule him, but as soon as he had gotten him money he became like himself again. So as soon as I was ended I bade him farewell for our two lives, and as men say a day longer."

some printers which roused his suspicions, and by diligently plying them with wine the startling secret at length came out that an English New Testament was actually in the press, and already far on its way to completion. Quite horrified at such a conspiracy, "worse," he thought, "than that of the eunuchs against Ahasuerus," he at once gave information to the magistrates, and demanded that the sheets should be seized, while he at the same time despatched a messenger to the English bishops to warn them of this unexpected danger. Hence the consternation of Tyndale and his hurried flight from Cologne.

With his precious sheets he escaped to Worms, where the enthusiasm for Luther and the Reformation was then at its height, and there at length he accomplished his design, producing for the first time a complete printed New Testament in English.<sup>1</sup> Knowing of the information that Cochlaeus had given, and that in consequence the books would be jealously watched, he printed also an edition in smaller size, as more likely to escape detection, and at once made provision for the

<sup>1</sup> Canon Westcott ("Hist. Bible") quotes an interesting account of Tyndale's work at Worms, from the diary of a German scholar who was a casual visitor there in 1526. After mentioning other subjects of conversation at the dinner-table, the writer goes on to say—"One told us that 6000 copies of the English New Testament had been printed at Worms, that it was translated by an Englishman who lived there with two of his countrymen, who was so complete a master of seven languages—Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, French—that you would fancy that whichever he spoke in was his native tongue. He told us also that the English, in spite of the active opposition of the King, were so eager for the Gospel that they would buy the New Testament even if they had to give 100,000 pieces of money for it."

forwarding his dangerous merchandise to England. In cases, in barrels, in bales of cloth, in sacks of flour, every secret way that could be devised, the books were sent; and in spite of the utmost vigilance in watching the ports, many of them arrived and were scattered far and wide through the country.

§ 4. Such a commotion as they created among the hostile clergy! Wycliffe's Testaments had been troublesome enough, even though it took months to finish a single copy and the cost was in a great measure prohibitive. But here were books pouring into the country capable of being produced at the rate of hundreds per day, and at a price within the reach of all. Vigorous measures indeed would be necessary now!

The warning of Cochlaeus had set them on their guard, and every port was carefully watched by officers appointed for the purpose. Thousands of copies were thus seized in their various disguises, and were burned with solemn ceremony at the old cross of St. Paul's, as "a burnt-offering most pleasing to Almighty God;"<sup>1</sup> and still other thousands supplied their place.<sup>2</sup> Tyndale was but little discouraged at their efforts, for he knew that the printing press could defy them all. "In burning the book," he says, "they did none other thing than I looked for; no more shall they do if they burn me also, if it be God's will that it should be so."

It was quite clear that they could not hinder the

<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Campeggio's letter to Wolsey.

<sup>2</sup> About 15,000 of his first New Testament were issued within four years.

entrance of the book into England. And then a brilliant thought occurred to the Bishop of London. He sought out Augustine Pakington, a merchant trading to Antwerp, and asked his opinion about the buying up of all the copies across the water.

"My lord," replied Pakington, who was a secret friend of Tyndale, "if it be your pleasure I could do in this matter probably more than any merchant in England; so if it be your lordship's pleasure to pay for them—for I must disburse money for them—I will insure you to have every book that remains unsold."

"Gentle Master Pakington," said the bishop, 'deemyng that he hadde God by the toe, whanne in truthe he hadde, as after he thought, the devyl by the fiste,'<sup>1</sup> "do your diligence and get them for me, and I will gladly give you whatever they may cost, for the books are naughty, and I intend surely to destroy them all, and to burn them at Paul's Cross."

A few weeks later Pakington sought the translator, whose funds he knew were at a low ebb.

"Master Tyndale," he said, "I have found you a good purchaser for your books."

"Who is he?" asked Tyndale.

"My lord of London."

"But if the bishop wants the books it must be only to burn them."

"Well," was the reply, "what of that? The bishop will burn them anyhow, and it is best that you should have the money for the enabling you to imprint others instead."

<sup>1</sup> "Halle's Chronicle."

And so the bargain was made. "The bishop had the books, Pakington had the thanks, and Tyndale had the money."

"I am the gladder," quoth Tyndale, "for these two benefits shall come thereof. I shall get money to bring myself out of debt, and the whole world will cry out against the burning of God's Word, and the overplus of the money that shall remain with me shall make me more studious to correct the said New Testament, and so newly to imprint the same once again, and I trust the second will be much better than ever was the first."

The Chronicle<sup>1</sup> which relates the story goes on to tell that—"After this Tyndale corrected the same Testaments again, and caused them to be newly imprinted, so that they came thick and threefold into England. The bishop sent for Pakington again, and asked how the Testaments were still so abundant. 'My lord,' replied the merchant, 'it were best for your lordship to buy up the stamps too by the which they are imprinted.'"

It is with evident enjoyment that the old chronicler presents to us another scene as a sequel to the story. A prisoner, a suspected heretic named Constantine, was being tried a few months later before Sir Thomas More. "Now Constantine," said the judge, "I would have thee to be plain with me in one thing that I shall ask, and I promise thee I will show thee favour in all other things whereof thou art accused. There

<sup>1</sup> "Halle's Chronicle."

are beyond the sea Tyndale, Joye, and a great many of you; I know they cannot live without help. There must be some that help and succour them with money, and thou, being one of them, hadst thy part thereof, and therefore knowest from whence it came. I pray thee, tell me who be they that help them thus."

"My lord," quoth Constantine, "I will tell thee truly—it is the Bishop of London that hath holpen us, for he hath bestowed among us a great deal of money upon New Testaments to burn them, and that hath been our chief succour and comfort."

"Now by my troth," quoth Sir Thomas More, "I think even the same, for I told the bishop thus much before he went about it."

The opponents of the book began at last to see that a printed Testament continually being produced was quite beyond their power to destroy. Bishop Toustal profited by his lesson, and instead of buying and burning the book any longer, he preached a famous sermon at Paul's Cross, declaring its "naughtiness," and asserting that he himself had found in it more than two thousand errors;<sup>1</sup> and at the close of his sermon he hurled the copy which he held into a great fire that blazed before him. Sir Thomas More, whose influence was deservedly great in England, followed up the attack. "To study to find errors in Tyndale's book," he said, "were like studying to find water in the sea." It was even too bad for revising and amend-

<sup>1</sup> "There is not so much as one i therein," says Tyndale, "if it lack the tittle over its head, but they have noted and number it to the ignorant people for a heresy."

ing, "for it is easier to make a web of new cloth than it is to sew up every hole in a net."<sup>1</sup> Tyndale indignantly replied to this attack; and certainly his opponent does not show to advantage in the argument, his sweeping charge narrowing itself down at the last to the mis-translation of half a dozen words.

Such attacks, made from different pulpits throughout the land, were much more effective than the previous stupid measures adopted against the Bible, chiefly because the people could seldom hear the refutation. But this was not always so. The friends of the Reformation were increasing in England, and they as well as Tyndale defended the book when they could, and generally with success.

In 1529 Latimer had preached at Cambridge his celebrated sermons "On the Card," which attracted a good deal of attention, arguing in favour of the translation and universal reading of Holy Scripture. The friars were enraged, and the more so as his reasoning was so difficult to answer. At length they selected a champion, Friar Buckingham; and certainly, if he may be taken as a type of the friars of his day, the Reformers' sneers at their ignorance were not without grounds.<sup>2</sup> A Sunday was fixed on which he was to

<sup>1</sup> More's *animus* against Tyndale is amusingly shown in his description of the translation of Jonah—"Jonas made out by Tyndale—a book that whoso delyte therein shall stande in peril that Jonas was never so swallowed up by the whale as by the delyte of that booke a mannes soul may be swallowed up by the Devyl that he shall never have the grace to get out again."

<sup>2</sup> "They said there was a new language discovered called Greek, of which people should beware, since it was that which produced all

demolish the arguments of Latimer, and on the appointed day the people assembled, and a sermon against Bible translation was preached which to us now must read more like jest than sober argument.

"Thus," asked the preacher with a triumphant smile, "where Scripture saith no man that layeth his hand to the plough and looketh back is fit for the kingdom of God, will not the ploughman when he readeth these words be apt forthwith to cease from his plough, and then where will be the sowing and the harvest? Likewise also whereas the baker readeth, 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump,' will he not be forthwith too sparing in the use of leaven, to the great injury of our health. And so also when the simple man reads the words, 'If thine eye offend thee pluck it out and cast it from thee,' incontinent he will pluck out his eyes, and so the whole realm will be full of blind men, to the great decay of the nation and the manifest loss of the King's grace. And thus by reading of the Holy Scriptures will the whole realm come into confusion."

The next Sunday St. Edward's Church was crowded to suffocation, for the report had gone abroad that Latimer was to reply to the Grey Friar's sermon. At the close of the prayers the old man ascended the pulpit, and amid breathless silence the sermon began—such a crushing, scathing rebuke as Buckingham and his party never recovered in Cambridge. One by one the argu-

the heresies; that in this language was come forth the New Testament, which was full of thorns and briars; that there was another new language too, called Hebrew, and they who learned it were turned Hebrews."—*Hody, De Textibus Bibl.*

ments were ridiculed as too foolish for a really serious reply. "Only children and fools," he said, "fail to distinguish between the figurative and the real meanings of language—between the image which is used and the thing which that image is intended to represent. For example," he continued, with a withering glance at his opponent, who sat before the pulpit, "if we paint a fox preaching in a friar's hood, nobody imagines that a fox is meant, but that craft and hypocrisy are described, which so often are found disguised in that garb."

It was evident, too, that many of the people sympathised with the Reformers in such contests. Day by day it became clearer now that the tide of public opinion in England was setting too strongly to be resisted in favour of a "People's Bible." In spite of all opposition the book was being everywhere talked about and read. "It passeth my power," writes Bishop Nikke, complaining to the Primate, "it passeth my power, or that of any spiritual man, to hinder it now, and if this continue much longer it will undo us all." There was no room for questioning about it. The path of the Bible was open at last. Not king nor pope could stay its progress now. Over England's long night of error and superstition and soul-crushing despotism God had said, "Let there be light!" and there was light.

§ 5. But the Light-bringer himself did not see that day. For weary years he had laboured for it, a worn, poverty-stricken exile in a far away German town, and now when it came his heroic life was over—the prison

and the stake had done their work. His enemies were many and powerful in England, and Vaughan, the royal envoy, had been instructed to persuade him to return. But Tyndale refused to go. "Whatever promises of safety may be made," he said, "the king would never be able to protect me from the bishops, who believe that no faith should be kept with heretics." A friend of Sir Thomas More then undertook the task, and a treacherous villain named Phillips, a clergyman of very plausible manners, contrived to win the confidence of the unsuspecting exile, "for Tyndale was simple and inexpert in the wily subtleties of the world." He confided in Phillips as a friend, lent him money when he wanted it, and utterly refused to listen to his landlord's suspicions about the man. At length, their plans being ripe, Tyndale was enticed some distance from his house, seized by Phillips' lurking assistants, and hurried to the dungeons of the Castle of Vilvorden. It is pitiful to read of the poor prisoner there, in his cold and misery and rags, writing to the governor to beg "your lordship, and that by the Lord Jesus, that if I am to remain here during the winter, you will request the procureur to be kind enough to send me from my goods which he has in his possession a warmer cap, for I suffer extremely from a perpetual catarrh, which is much increased by this cell. A warmer coat also, for that which I have is very thin; also a piece of cloth to patch my leggings—my shirts too are worn out."

There was no hope of escape from the first. He

knew that the clerical influence in England was too strong against him to hope for any help in that quarter. Long ago he had said with sad foreboding, "If they burn me also, they shall do none other thing than I look for," and now his foreboding was to be realised. On Friday the 6th October 1536 he was strangled at the stake and then burnt to ashes, fervently praying with his last words, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes," a prayer which was nearer to its answer than the heroic martyr deemed.

There is no grander life in the whole annals of the Reformation than that of William Tyndale—none which comes nearer in its beautiful self-forgetfulness to His who "laid down His life for His sheep." Many a man has suffered in order that a great cause might conquer by means of himself. No such thought sullied the self-devotion of Tyndale. He issued his earlier editions of the New Testament without a name, "following the counsel of Christ which exhorteth men to do their good deeds secretly." "I assure you," said he to Vaughan, the envoy of the king, "if it would stand with the king's most gracious pleasure to grant a translation of the Scripture to be put forth among his people like as it is put forth among the subjects of the emperor here, be it the translation of whatsoever person he pleases, I shall immediately make faithful promises never to write more nor abide two days in these parts after the same, but immediately repair unto his realm, and there humbly submit myself at the feet of his royal majesty, offering my body to suffer what

pain or torture, yea, what death his grace wills, so that this be obtained."

Poverty and distress and misrepresentation were his constant lot; imprisonment and death were ever staring him in the face; but "none of these things moved him, neither counted he his life dear unto him" for the accomplishment of the work which God had set him.

No higher honour could be given to any man than such a work to accomplish, and among all the heroes of the Reformation none worthier of that honour could be found than William Tyndale.

§ 6. And now a few words about the translation itself. As we have seen already, all the earlier English versions were but translations of a translation, being derived from the Vulgate or older Latin versions. Tyndale for the first time goes back to the original Hebrew and Greek,<sup>1</sup> though the manuscripts accessible in his time were not of much authority as compared with those used by our revisers now.

And not only did he go back to the original languages seeking for the truth, but he embodied that truth when found in so noble a translation that it has been but little improved on even to the present day. Every succeeding version is in reality little more than a revision of Tyndale's; even our present Authorised Version owes to him chiefly the ease and beauty for

<sup>1</sup> See Diagram facing the title-page. Besides Erasmus' Greek Testament, Tyndale had also before him the Latin Vulgate and Erasmus' Latin translation of the New Testament. It is said too that he used Luther's German Bible.

which it is so admired. "The peculiar genius," says Mr. Froude, "which breathes through the English Bible, the mingled tenderness and majesty, the Saxon simplicity, the grandeur, unequalled, unapproached in the attempted improvements of modern scholars—all are here, and bear the impress of the mind of one man, and that man William Tyndale."

The New Testament was the work to which he chiefly devoted himself, bringing out edition after edition as he saw anything to be improved. Of the Old Testament he translated only the Pentateuch, the Historical Books, and part of the Prophets.

The margin contains a running comment on the text, and some of the notes rather amusingly exhibit his strong anti-Papal feeling. He has a grim jest in the margin of Exod. xxxii. 35, "The Pope's bull slayeth more than Aaron's calf." On Lev. xxi. 5 he comments, "Of the heathen priests, then, our prelates took the example of their bald pates;" and where the account is given, Exod. xxxvi. 5, &c., of the forbidding the people to bring any more offerings for the building of the tabernacle, he has this note on the margin, "When will the Pope say Hoo! (hold!) and forbid an offering for the building of St. Peter's Church? And when will our spirituality say Hoo! and forbid to give them more land? Never until they have all."

Many of his quaint expressions have been altered in succeeding versions, not always, perhaps, for the better. Here are a few as specimens taken almost entirely from the New Testament:—

Gen. xxxix. 2—"And the Lorde was with Ioseph, and he was a luckie felowe."

Matt. xxvi. 30—"When they had said grace."

Mark vi. 27—"He sent forthe the hangman."

Rev. i. 10—"I was in the Sprete on a Sondaye."

Matt. xxvii. 62—"The daye that foloweth Good Fridaye."

1 Cor. xvi. 8—"I will tarry at Ephesus til Witson-tyde."

Acts xiii. 15—"The rulers of the synagogue sent to them after the lecture, saying, If ye have any sermon to exhort the people, say on."

Acts xiv. 13—"Brought oxen and garlandes to the churche porche."

1 Peter v. 3—"Be not as lordes over the parrishes."

Heb. xii. 16—"Which for one breakfast sold his birthright."

Matt. iv. 24—"Holden of divers diseases and grip-inges."

Matt. vi. 7—"When ye pray, bable not moche."

Matt. xv. 27—"The whelpes eat of the crommes."

Mark xii. 2—"He sent to the tenauntes a servant."

Luke xx. 9—"He lett it forthe to fermers."

The following passage from Luke ii. I have selected as a characteristic specimen of Tyndale, though perhaps not showing as well as other passages would the resemblance to our Authorised Version. Opposite is printed the corresponding portion in Wycliffe's Testament, to show the growth of the English language in the meantime:—

*Specimen from Wycliffe.*

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(LUKE ii. 1-11.)

Forsothe it was don in tho dayes, a maundement went out fro Caesar August that al the world schulde be discruped. This first discrupinge was maad of Cyryne iustice of Cirye, and alle men wenten that thei schulde make profescioun ech by himself in to his cite. Sothly and Ioseph stighede up fro Galilee of the cite of Nazareth in to Jude, in to a cite of Dauith that is clepid Bedleem, for that he was of tho house and meyne of Dauith, that he schulde knowleche with Mary with child spousid wyf to hym.

Sothly it was don whanne thei weren there the dayes weren fulfilled that she schulde bere child. And she childide her firste born sone and wlappide hym in clothis and putted hym in a cracche, for ther was not place to hym in the comyn stable.

*Specimen from Tyndale.*

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(LUKE ii. 1-11.)

Hit folowed in thoose dayes that there wente oute a commaundment from Auguste the Emperour that all the woorlde shulde be valued. This tarynge was first executed when Syrenus was lefテナunt in Siria. And every man wente in to his awne shire tounes there to be tared. And Ioseph also ascended from Galile oute of a cite called Nazareth, unto Jewry, into a cite of David which is called Bethleem, because he was of the housse and linage of David, to be tared with Mary his wedded wyfe, which was with childe. And it fortuneth while they there were her tyme was come that she shulde be delyvered. And she brought forth her first begotten sonne and wrapped hym in swaddylinge clothes, and layed hym in a manger because there was no roume for them within in the hostrey.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *THE BIBLE AFTER TYNDALE'S DAYS.*

- § 1. Three Years After. § 2. Twenty Years After.  
§ 3. Fifty Years More gone by.

"LORD, open the King of England's eyes!"

Pity that William Tyndale, as he gasped forth his dying prayer, could not have lifted even a little way the veil that hid from him the future of England.

#### § 1. THREE YEARS AFTER.

In every parish church stands an English Bible, whose frontispiece alone is sufficient to tell of the marvellous change that has taken place in the meantime.

The design is by Holbein. In the first compartment the Almighty is seen in the clouds with outstretched arms. Two scrolls proceed out of His mouth to the right and to the left. On the former is the phrase, "The word which goeth forth from me shall not return to me empty, but shall accomplish whatsoever I will have done." The other is addressed to King Henry, who is kneeling in the distance bareheaded, with his crown lying at his feet—"I have found me a man after

mine own heart, who shall fulfil all my will." Henry answers, "Thy word is a lantern unto my feet."

Immediately below is the King, seated on his throne, holding in each hand a book, on which is written "The Word of God." This he is giving to Cranmer and another bishop, who, with a group of priests, are on the right of the picture, saying, "Take this and teach;" the other, on the opposite side, he holds out to Cromwell and the lay peers, and the words are, "I make a decree that in all my kingdom men shall tremble and fear before the Living God;" while a third scroll, falling downward over his feet, speaks alike to peer and prelate—"Judge righteous judgment; turn not away your ear from the prayer of any poor man."

In the third compartment Cranmer and Cromwell are distributing the Bibles to kneeling priests and laymen, and at the bottom a preacher with a benevolent and beautiful face is addressing a crowd from a pulpit in the open air. He is apparently commencing his sermon with the words, "I exhort, therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, thanksgivings, be made for all men, for kings"—and at the word "kings" the people are shouting, "Vivat Rex!" children who know no Latin lisping, "God save the King!" while at the extreme left a prisoner at a jail window is joining in the cry of delight as if he too were delivered from a worse bondage.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This description is taken from Mr. Froude's *History of England*, where, however, the frontispiece is erroneously said to belong to an edition of the Coverdale Bible.

This was the so-called "GREAT BIBLE" of 1539, the first English "Authorised Version."

It was indeed a marked change that had passed over England. The Reformation was gaining ground among clergy and laity, Henry had openly broken with the Pope, and there seemed no disposition anywhere to oppose the desire for a "People's Bible."

But the opposition to William Tyndale still remained. His stern uncompromising attitude towards Papal error had made him many enemies in Church and court. His works had already been publicly condemned, and the men who had condemned him and pursued him to his death were resolved that his Bible should never be the Bible of England.

Yet this "Great Bible," the Authorised Version of the nation, was virtually Tyndale's!

This is how it came about. Already in these three years three different versions had appeared in England. In 1536, the very year after Tyndale's imprisonment, came the Bible<sup>1</sup> of Myles Coverdale, the man who after

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes called the "Treacle Bible," from its rendering of Jer. viii. 22, "Is there no treacle in Gilead?" Here are some other curious expressions:—

Gen. viii. 11—"The dove bare an olive leafe in her nebbe."

Joshua ii. 11—"Our heart had fayled us, neither is there good stomacke in any manne."

Judges ix. 53—"And brake his brain-panne."

Job v. 7—"It is man that is born to misery like as a byrd for to flee."

Acts xi. 8—"Ther widowes were not looked vpon in the daylie handreaching."

In original edition Queen Anne is referred to as the king's "dearest

Tyndale has played the most prominent part of any in the history of the English Bible. Coverdale was a man of very different stamp from his great predecessor. He had neither his ability nor strength of character, nor was he, like him, fitted by a lifelong study for his task as a translator, and the difference comes markedly out in the work produced by each. But it is only fair to say, too, that he was quite conscious of his defects, that he did the work before him to the best of his ability, "seeking it not, neither desiring it," but feeling that his country needed it done, and modestly regretting that no better man was there to do it.

His Bible makes no pretence to be an original translation; it is "translated out of Douche and Latin into English," with the help of "five sundry interpreters" (*i.e.*, translators), and the chief of these "interpreters" is evidently William Tyndale, whom, in the New Testament especially, he closely follows.

The following year (1537) appeared "Matthews' Bible,"<sup>1</sup> which was really prepared by John Rogers, one of the early Reformers, afterwards martyred in Queen Mary's reign. His known opinions and his connection with Tyndale accounts for the suppression of his real name as likely to injure the circulation of the book. This work was Tyndale's translation pure

juste wyfe and most virtuous princesse." A copy now in the British Museum has this inscription, but "Ane" is changed to Jane, thus JAne. The other copies have, some Ane, some Jane, while some actually leave the space blank, as if the editor were unable to keep pace with Henry's rapid change of wives.

<sup>1</sup> In it the Song of Solomon is entitled "Solomon's Balafes."

and simple, all but the latter half of the Old Testament (which is taken, with some alteration, from Coverdale's Bible); and one feels pleased for the old exile's sake, though his honour was given to others, that Archbishop Cranmer should "like it better than any translation heretofore made," he "would rather see it licensed by the king than receive £1000," and "if they waited till the bishops should set forth a better translation they would wait," he thinks, "till the day after doomsday."<sup>1</sup> It is not easy to understand how it escaped detection as the work of Tyndale, especially as it contained those strong anti-Papal notes by which Tyndale's version gave such offence.

Shortly after appeared "Taverner's Bible,"<sup>2</sup> which was little more than an edition of Matthews' with its more violent polemical notes toned down or omitted.

None of these versions were satisfactory. Coverdale's was but a second-hand translation, and Matthews' was only in part derived from the originals, besides which the controversial notes were against its success.

So it came to pass that the Great Bible was set on

<sup>1</sup> "Cranmer's Remains and Letters," p. 344. Parker Society.

<sup>2</sup> Little is known of him. The description in Fuller's "Church History," chap. ii. p. 459, is certainly not flattering—"Surely preaching must have run very low if it be true what I read that Mr. Tavernour of Water Eaton, in Oxfordshire, gave the scholars a sermon at St. Mary's with his gold chain about his neck and his sword by his side, beginning with these words, 'Arriving at Mount St. Mary's, in the stony stage where I now stand, I have brought you some fine biscuits baked in the oven of charity and carefully conserved for the chickens of the Church, the sparrows of the Spirit, the sweet swallows of salvation.'"

foot. Cranmer and some of the chief advisers of the king had set their hearts on having a translation that would be really worthy of its position as a National Bible. Myles Coverdale was selected to take charge of the work, and he proceeded to Paris with the king's printer, that the book might be brought out in the best possible style. But the Inquisitor-General got notice of the project, and the result was a repetition of the episode of Tyndale at Cologne, only that Coverdale fared better than his great predecessor, for though his Bibles were all seized by the "Lieutenant Criminall," he carried off the printing-press, the types, and the printers themselves to complete the work in England. It was published in April 1539, and was "authorised to be used and frequented in every church in the kingdom."<sup>1</sup> The reader who wants a specimen of its style has but to turn to the Psalms in his Prayer-Book or the "sentences" in the Communion Service, which are taken unchanged from the Great Bible. It has another point of interest in connection with the Revised Version. It indicated some texts as doubtful by printing them in small type, and among them was the celebrated passage 1 John v. 7, 8, which the recent revisers have omitted altogether.

But more important to notice is the fact that the book is really no new translation. It may be described

<sup>1</sup> When Henry was asked to authorise it, "Well," said he, "but are there any heresies maintained thereby?" They answered that there were no heresies that they could find maintained in it. "Then in God's name," said the king, "let it go forth among our people."

as a compilation from Matthews' and Coverdale's Bibles—or better still, perhaps, with a recent writer,<sup>1</sup> as a revision of Matthews' by Coverdale; and since, as we have seen, Matthews' was almost entirely Tyndale's version, the Great Bible was really little more than a revised edition of Tyndale!

Thus had the old martyr triumphed. Only three years since these men had brought him to his death, and here was his Bible in their midst, though they knew it not, authorised by the king, commended by the clergy, and placed in the parish churches for the teaching of the people! And as if to mark the change with all the emphasis that was possible, an inscription on the title-page told that "it was oversene and perused at the commandement of the King's Highness by the ryghte reverende fathers in God, Cuthbert bishop of Duresme (Durham), and Nicholas bishop of Rochester." Who, think you, reader, was Cuthbert of Duresme? None other than Cuthbert Tonsal, his untiring opponent, the bishop who had turned him discouraged from his door, who had bargained with Pakington to purchase the Bibles, who had hurled into the flames from the pulpit of Paul's Cross the translation which now went forth bearing his name!

## § 2. TWENTY YEARS AFTER.

It is the day of Elizabeth's entry into London, and the streets are bright with waving banners and gay dresses of the citizens struggling to get closer to the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mombert, "English Versions."

royal procession, and shouting with joy as they behold their young queen. There is more in those shouts than the mere gaiety of a holiday crowd. It is a glad day for many in England. The dark reign of Mary is over, with its imprisonments and martyrdoms, and the men of the Reformation are looking forward hopefully to the future. There are those in that crowd who have lived for years in constant dread—there are those who have had to fly for their lives, some of them companions of the exiles at Geneva, waiting to send word to their comrades abroad how it should fare in England.

Now the shouting has ceased. There is a pause in the long line of banners and plumes and glittering steel. The procession has just arrived at "the Little Conduit in Chepe," where one of those pageants, the delight of our forefathers, is prepared. An old man in emblematic dress stands forth before the queen, and it is told Her Grace that this is Time. "Time," quoth she, "and Time it was that brought me hither." Beside him stands a white-robed maiden, who is introduced as "Truth, the daughter of Time." She holds in her hand a book on which is written, "*Verbum veritatis*," the Word of truth, an English Bible, which she presents to the queen. Raising it with both her hands, Elizabeth presses it to her lips, and then laying it against her heart, amid the enthusiastic shouting of the multitude, she gracefully thanks the city for so precious a gift.

It was a good omen for the future of the Bible, which had been almost a closed book in the preceding reign. And within three months it was followed by one still more significant. The Reformers who had fled to Geneva returned to their homes, bearing with them a new version of the Bible, the work of the best years of their banishment,<sup>1</sup> and the dedication of the book was accepted by Elizabeth.

This was the first appearance in England of the famous Geneva Bible, the "Breeches Bible," as it was afterwards called, from its rendering of Genesis iii. 7, where Adam and Eve "sewed fig-tree leaves together, and made themselves breeches."<sup>2</sup> It was the most popular Bible that had ever appeared in England, and for sixty years it held its own against all rivals, for a time contesting the ground even with our own Authorised Version.

It was both cheaper and less cumbrous than the "Great Bible" of Cranmer, as well as being a much more careful and accurate work, though, like most of its predecessors, it was more a revision than a translation, being chiefly based on Tyndale. It contained marginal notes, which were considered very helpful in dealing with obscure passages of Scripture,<sup>3</sup> though, as might

<sup>1</sup> Myles Coverdale was one of them.

<sup>2</sup> It was really only one edition published by Barker that contained this reading, which was also the reading of Wycliffe's Bible.

<sup>3</sup> I do not know if the note on Rev. ix. 3 would be thus classed. The "locusts that came out of the bottomless pit" are explained as meaning "false teachers, heretics, and worldly subtil prelates, with Monks, Friars, Cardinals, Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, Doctors, Bachelors and Masters of Artes, which forsake Christ to maintain false doctrine."

be expected from Geneva, of a strongly Calvinistic bias. These notes should possess a special interest for us, for, as we shall see afterward, we have partly to thank them for our Authorised Version of to-day.

Some other of its peculiarities are worth notice. It was the first Bible that laid aside the old black letter for the present Roman type. It was also the first to recognise the divisions into verses, and the first to omit the Apocrypha. It omits the name of St. Paul from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and it uses italics for all words not occurring in the original.

The history of the dark troublous days of opposition to the Bible and persecution to its promoters ceases for ever (let us hope) with the issue of the Geneva Bible.

### § 3. FIFTY YEARS MORE GONE BY.

How Tyndale's heart would have swelled at the sight ! A king of England himself is directing an English Bible translation !

In January 1604 a conference of bishops and clergy had been held in the drawing-rooms of Hampton Court Palace, under the presidency of King James himself, to consider certain alleged grievances of the Puritan party in the Church, and among other subjects of discussion was rather unexpectedly brought up that of the defectiveness of the two current translations of Scripture.

*Specimens.*

## 23D PSALM.

COVERDALE'S, 1535.

GREAT BIBLE, 1539.

The Lorde is my shepherde I  
can want nothing. He fedeth  
me in a greene pasture and  
ledeth me to a fresh water.  
He quickeneth my soule and  
bringeth me forth in the waye  
of righteousness for his names  
sake. Though I shulde walke  
now in the valley of the  
shadowe of death yet I feare  
no euell for thou art with me,  
thy staffe and thy shepehoke  
comforte me.

Thou preparest a table  
before agaynst mine enemies  
thou anoyntest my heade with  
oyle and fyllest my cuppe  
full. Oh let thy louing-  
kyndnes and mercy folowe  
me all the dayes off my lyfe  
that I maye dwell in the  
house off the Lord for euer.

The Lorde is my shepherde  
therefore can I lacke nothing.  
He shal fede me in a greene  
pasture and leade me forth  
besyde y<sup>e</sup> watirs of colorte.  
He shal conuert my soule and  
bring me forth in y<sup>e</sup> pathes  
of righteousness for his names  
sake. Yea though I walke  
thorowey, valleie of y<sup>e</sup> shadowe  
of death I wyl fear no euell  
for thou art w<sup>th</sup> me: thy rod  
and thy staffe comfort me.

Thou shalt prepare a table  
before me agaynst them that  
trouble me: thou has anoynt-  
ed my head w<sup>th</sup> oyle and my  
cup shal be ful. But louing  
kyndnes and mercy shal folowe  
me all the dayes of my lyfe  
and I wyl dwell in y<sup>e</sup> house  
of y<sup>e</sup> Lorde for euer.

England had at that time three different versions. The Genevan was the favourite of the people in general; a rival version, called the Bishops' Bible, which had been brought out some eight years after, was supported

*Specimens.*

## 23D PSALM.

## GENEVAN BIBLE, 1560.

1. The Lord *is* my shepheard  
I shall not want.

2. Hee maketh mee to rest in  
greene pasture *and* leadeth mee  
by the still waters.

3. He restoreth my soule *and*  
leadeth me in the paths of  
righteousnesse for His Names  
sake.

4. Ye though I walk through  
the valley of the shadowe of  
death I will feare no euill for  
thou art with me: thy rodde  
and thy staffe they comfort me.

5. Thou doest prepare a table  
before me in the sight of mine  
adversaries; thou dost anoynt  
mine head with oyle *and* my  
cup runneth over.

6. Doubtlesse kindnesse and  
mercy shall follow mee all the  
dayes of my life and I shal  
remaine a long season in the  
house of the Lord.

## BISHOPS' BIBLE, 1568.

1. God is my shepheard  
therefore I can lacke nothyng:  
he wyll cause me to repose my-  
selfe in pasture full of grasse  
and he wyll leade me vnto  
calme waters.

2. He will conuert my soule;  
he wyll bring me forth into  
the pathes of righteousnesse for  
his names sake.

3. Yea though I walke through  
the valley of the shadowe of  
death I wyll fear no euyl; for  
thou art with me, thy rodde and  
thy staffe be the thynges that  
do comfort me.

4. Thou wilt prepare a table  
before me in the presence of  
myne aduersaries; thou has  
anoynted my head with oyle  
and my cup shalbe brymme ful.

5. Truly felicitie and mercy  
shal folowe me all the dayes of  
my lyfe: and I wyll dwell in  
the house of God for a long  
tyme.

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by ecclesiastical authority; while the "Great Bible" of Henry VIII. might still be seen chained to a stone or wooden desk in many of the country churches. But none of these was likely to be accepted as the Bible

of the English nation. The Great Bible was antiquated and cumbersome, the Genevan, though a careful translation and convenient for general use, had become, through the Puritan character of its notes, quite the Bible of a party; while the Bishops' Version, a very inferior production, neither commanded the respect of scholars nor suited the wants of the people.

There was, therefore, plainly a need for a new version, which, being accepted by all, should form a bond of union between different classes and rival religious communities. Yet when Dr. Reynolds, the leader of the Puritan party, put forward such a proposal at the Conference, it was very coldly received, Bancroft, bishop of London, seeming to express the general feeling of his party when he grumbled that "if every man had his humour about new versions, there would be no end of translating." Probably the fact of the proposal having come from the Puritans had also some effect on this conservatism of the bishops; in any case it seemed that the project must fall through for want of their support.

But if the bishops in the palace drawing-room that day thought so, they soon found that they had literally "calculated without their host." There was one man in that assembly who looked with special favour on the new proposal, and that man was the royal pedant who presided. A Bible translation made under his auspices would greatly add to the glory of his reign, besides which, to a man whose learning was really considerable, and who was specially fond of displaying it in theological matters, the direction of such a work would be

very congenial. And if a further motive were needed, it was easily found in his unconcealed dislike to the popular Geneva Bible. The whole tone of its politics and theology, as exhibited in the marginal notes, was utterly distasteful to James, as he plainly showed soon after in his directions to the new translators, for "marry withal, he gave this caveat, that no notes should be added, having found in those which were annexed to the Geneva translation some notes very partial, untrue, seditious, and savouring too much of dangerous and traitorous conceits."

Two of these notes especially vexed him. In 2 Chron. xv. 16 it is recorded that Asa "removed his mother from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove;" and the margin contains this comment, "Herein he showed that he lacked zeal, for she ought to have died," a remark probably often remembered by the fanatics of the day in reference to the death of James's mother, the Queen of Scots. There was another which rather amusingly clashed with the grand Stuart theories of the divine right of kings to be above all law and to command implicit obedience from their subjects. In the passage in the first chapter of Exodus describing the conduct of the Hebrew midwives, who "did not as the king of Egypt commanded, but saved the men-children alive," the margin declares "their disobedience to the king was lawful, though their dissembling was evil." "It is false," cried the indignant advocate of kingly right; "to disobey a king is not lawful; such traitorous conceits should not go forth among the people."

But, however men may smile at the absurdities of James, which in some measure led to the new translation, there can be no question as to the wisdom shown in his arrangements for carrying out the work. Fifty-four learned men were selected impartially from High Churchmen and Puritans, as well as from those who, like Saville and Boys, represented scholarship totally unconnected with any party. And in addition to this band of appointed revisers, the king also designed to secure the co-operation of every Biblical scholar of note in the kingdom. The Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge was desired to name any fit man with whom he was acquainted, and Bishop Bancroft received a letter from the king himself, directing him to "move the bishops to inform themselves of all such learned men within their several dioceses as, having especial skill in the Hebrew and Greek tongues, have taken pains in their private studies of the Scriptures for the clearing of any obscurities either in the Hebrew or the Greek, or touching any difficulties or mistakings in the former English translations, which we have now commanded to be thoroughly viewed and amended, and thereupon to earnestly charge them, signifying our pleasure therein, that they send such their observations to Mr. Lively, our Hebrew reader in Cambridge, or to Dr. Harding, our Hebrew reader in Oxford, or to Dr. Andrews, Dean of Westminster, to be imparted to the rest of their several companies, that so our said intended translation may have the help and furtherance of all our principal learned men within this our kingdom."

An admirable set of rules was drawn up for the instruction of the revisers, directing amongst other things that the Bishops' Bible should be used as a basis, and departed from only when the text required it; that any competent scholars might be consulted about special difficulties; that differences of opinion should be settled at a general meeting; that divisions of chapters should be as little changed as possible, and marginal references should be given from one scripture to another; and last, but by no means least, that there should be no marginal notes, except for the explanation of Hebrew and Greek words. This simple rule did probably more than anything else to make our Authorised Version the Bible of all classes in England, binding us together as a Protestant nation by a tie which the strife of parties and the war of politics has since been insufficient to sever. Had the opposite course been adopted, we should now have probably the Bibles of different religious parties competing in unseemly rivalry, each reflecting the theological bias of the party from which it came.

Never before had such labour and care been expended on the English Bible. The revisers were divided into six companies, each of which took its own portion, and every aid accessible was used to make their work a thorough success. They carefully studied the Greek and Hebrew; they used the best commentaries of European scholars; the Bibles in Spanish, Italian, French, and German were examined for any help they might afford in arriving at the exact sense

of each passage; and when the sense was found, no pains were spared to express it in clear, vigorous, idiomatic English. All the excellences of the previous versions were noted, for the purpose of incorporating them in the work, and even the Rhemish (Roman Catholic) translation was laid under contribution for some expressive phrases which it contained. "Neither," says Dr. Miles Smith, in the preface, "did we disdain to revise that which we had done, and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered, fearing no reproach for slowness nor coveting praise for expedition;" and the result was the production of this splendid Authorised Version of which Englishmen to-day are so justly proud.

For more than two centuries English Protestant writers have spoken of it in terms of almost unanimous praise—its "grace and dignity," its "flowing words," its "masterly English style." Even a Roman Catholic divine, Dr. Geddes (1786), declares that "if accuracy and strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute an excellent version, this is of all versions the most excellent." And an almost touching tribute is paid it by one who evidently looked back on it with yearning regret, after having exchanged its beauties for the uncouthness of the Romanist versions. "Who will say," writes Father Faber, "that the uncommon beauty and marvellous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy in this country? It lives on the ear like a music that can never be forgotten,

like the sound of church bells, which the convert scarcely knows how he can forego. Its felicities seem often to be almost things rather than words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of the national seriousness. Nay, it is worshipped with a positive idolatry, in extenuation of whose fanaticism its intrinsic beauty pleads availingly with the scholar. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. It is the representative of a man's best moments; all that there has been about him of soft, and gentle, and pure, and penitent, and good speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible. It is his sacred thing, which doubt never dimmed and controversy never soiled; and in the length and breadth of the land there is not a Protestant with one spark of religiousness about him whose spiritual biography is not in his Saxon Bible."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *THE REVISED VERSION.*

§ 1. Preparation for Revision. § 2. The Jerusalem Chamber.  
§ 3. The Revisers at Work. § 4. Claims of the Revised Bible. § 5. Will it Disturb Men's Faith? § 6. General Remarks—Conclusion.

WHILE fully appreciating the beauty and excellence of his Authorised Version, the reader who has thus far followed this little sketch will scarcely require now to ask, Why should we need a new revision?

He will have seen that the whole history of the Bible from Tyndale's days is a history of growth and improvement by means of repeated revisions. Tyndale's first New Testament (1525) was revised by himself in 1534, and again in 1535. In Matthews' Bible it appeared still more improved in 1537. The Great Bible (1539) was the result of a further revision, which was repeated again in the Genevan (1560), the Bishops' (1568), and still more thoroughly in our splendid Authorised Version (1611), which latter is itself one of the best proofs of the value of Bible revision.

He will have seen also (to recapitulate here for

greater clearness)—(1.) that in the present day we have access to a treasury of ancient manuscripts, versions, and quotations such as the scholars of King James's day had never dreamed of; (2.) that the science of textual criticism, which teaches the value and the best methods of dealing with these documents, has entirely sprung up since; (3.) that our scholars are better acquainted with the Sacred Languages, and able to distinguish delicate shades of meaning which were quite lost on their predecessors; and (4.) lastly, that owing to the natural growth of the English language itself many words in the Authorised Version have become obsolete, and several have completely changed their meaning during the past 300 years.

And thus the duty is laid upon our Biblical scholars which Tyndale in his first preface imposed on those of his own day, "that if they perceive in any place that the version has not attained unto the very sense of the tongue or the very meaning of Scripture, or have not given the right English word, that they should put to their hands and amend it, *remembering that so is their duty to do.*"

About the beginning of the present century the appearance of several partial revisions by private individuals indicated the feeling in the minds of scholars that the time for a new Bible Revision was at hand. As years went on the feeling grew stronger, and leading men in the Church were pleading that the work should not be long delayed. During the past

250 years, they urged, great stores of Biblical information have been accumulating;<sup>1</sup> our ability to use such information has been greatly increased; and it is of importance to the interests of religion that that information should be fully disseminated by a careful correction of our received Scriptures. Dr. Tischendorf's discovery at Mount Sinai still further intensified this feeling; and so it created little surprise when, on the 10th February 1870, Bishop Wilberforce rose in the Upper House of the Southern Convocation to propose, "That a committee of both Houses be appointed, with power to confer with any committee that may be appointed by the Convocation of the Northern Province, to report on the desirableness of a revision of the Authorised Version of the New Testament, whether by marginal notes or otherwise, in all those passages where plain and clear errors, whether in the Greek text adopted by the translators, or in the translation

<sup>1</sup> Fully 200 years ago the way began to be prepared for our present revision by several criticisms and attempts at correction of the Authorised Version. It soon became clear, however, that such attempts were premature in the then state of information as to the Original Scriptures, and scholars began to direct their attention rather to the laying of the foundation for a revision in the future by collecting and examining Greek and Hebrew manuscripts, together with the various early versions and quotations from the Fathers. Towards the close of the eighteenth century Kennicott and De Rossi had published the results of their examination of several hundred Hebrew manuscripts; and in more recent times the same service was rendered to the Greek by Drs. Tischendorf, Tregelles, Scrivener, and others, whose way had been prepared by many distinguished predecessors. Besides, there was the work of a long series of commentators in investigating the meaning of the Sacred Writers, so that, on the whole, a very valuable foundation for revision existed by the middle of the present century.

made from the same, shall on due investigation be found to exist." After the enlarging of this resolution so as to include the Old Testament also, it was adopted by both Houses.

§ 2. Four months later, on a bright summer day towards the close of June 1870, a distinguished company was assembled in the Jerusalem Chamber in Westminster Abbey.

In that room in days long gone by the first of the Lancastrian kings breathed out his weary life. Beneath those windows sat the "Assembly of Divines" when the ill-fated Charles ruled in England; here the Westminster Confession was drawn up; and here too, under the auspices of William of Orange, was discussed the great Prayer-Book Revision of 1689, intended to join together Churchmen and Dissenters.

But no memory of that ancient chamber will eclipse in the future that of the work for which these men were assembled on that summer afternoon, for the Bible Revision had at length been begun, and this was the appointed New Testament Company.

At the centre of the long table sat the chairman, Bishop Ellicott, and around him the flower of our English scholarship. There were Alford and Stanley and Lightfoot, intently studying the sheets before them on the table. Westcott was there, and Hort and Scrivener—names long famous in the history of textual criticism—Dr. Eadie of Scotland, and the Master of the Temple, and the venerable Archbishop of Dublin,

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with many other scholars no less distinguished than they. Different religious communities were represented—different schools of thought—different opinions on matters closely connected with the work in hand. This is one of the great securities for the fairness of the New Revision. Whatever other charges may be brought against it, that of bias, even unconscious bias, towards any set of theological views is quite out of the question where Baptist and Methodist and Presbyterian and Churchman sat side by side in the selected company of Revisers. And, as if to make this assurance doubly sure, across the Atlantic a similarly constituted company was preparing to co-operate with these to criticise the work and suggest emendations, so that on the whole nearly a hundred of the ripest scholars of England and America were connected with the New Revision.

§ 3. And now let us watch the Revisers at their work. Before each man lies a sheet with a column of the Authorised Version printed in the middle, leaving a wide margin on either side for suggested alterations, the left hand for changes in the Greek text, and the right for those referring to the English rendering. These sheets are already covered with notes, the result of each Reviser's private study of the passage beforehand. After prayers and reading of the minutes, the chairman reads over for the company part of the passage on the printed sheet (Matt. i. 18-25), and asks for any suggested emendations.

At the first verse a member, referring to the notes on his sheet, remarks that certain old manuscripts read "the birth of the Christ" instead of "the birth of Jesus Christ." Dr. Scrivener and Dr. Hort state the evidence on the subject, and after a full discussion it is decided by the votes of the meeting that the received reading has most authority in its favour; but, in order to represent fairly the state of the case, it is allowed that the margin should contain the words, "Some ancient authorities read 'of the Christ.'" Some of the members are of opinion that the name "Holy Ghost" in same verse would be better if modernised into "Holy Spirit," but as this is a mere question of rendering, it is laid aside until the textual corrections have been discussed. The next of importance is the word "first-born" in ver. 25, which is omitted in many old authorities. Again the evidence on both sides is fully stated, and the members present, each of whom has already privately studied it before, vote on the question, the result being that the words "her first-born" are omitted.

And now, the textual question being settled, the chairman asks for suggestions as to the rendering, and it is proposed that in the first verse the word "betrothed" should be substituted for "espoused," the latter being rather an antiquated form. This also is decided by vote in the affirmative, and thus they proceed verse by verse till the close of the meeting, when the whole passage, as amended, is read over by the chairman.

Four years afterward we glance at their work again.

They have reached now the First Epistle General of St. John, and the sheets lying before them contain part of the 5th chapter. No question of importance arises till the 7th verse is reached—

7. "For there are three that bear record [in heaven—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.

8. And there are three that bear witness in earth], the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one"—

when it is proposed that that part of the passage which we have here placed in brackets be omitted as not belonging to the original text.

Time was when such a suggestion would have roused a formidable controversy;<sup>1</sup> but textual criticism has greatly progressed since then, and the question is not considered by the Revisers even to need discussing. The evidence is as follows:—The passage occurs in two *modern* Greek manuscripts—one of them in the library of Trinity College, Dublin—in one or two Ancient Versions of comparatively little value, and many modern copies of the Vulgate; besides which it is quoted by a few African Fathers, whose testimony, on the whole, is not of much weight in its favour.

Against this are to be set the following facts:—  
(1.) Not a single Greek manuscript or church lesson-book before the fifteenth century has any trace of the passage. This in itself would be sufficient evidence against it. (2.) It is omitted in almost every Ancient Version of any critical value, including the best copies

<sup>1</sup> Upwards of fifty books, pamphlets, &c., written on the subject are mentioned in Horne's Introduction.

of the Vulgate (St. Jerome's Revised Bible); and (3.) no Greek Father quotes it even in the arguments about the Trinity, where it would have been of immense importance if it had been in their copies. There is other evidence against it also; but it must be quite clear, even from this, that the passage only lately got interpolated into our Greek Testament, and never had any right to its place in the English Bible.<sup>1</sup> The Revisers therefore omit it from the text.

But the reader must not think that this description represents the amount of care bestowed on the work. After this first revision had been completed, of a certain portion, it was transmitted to America and reviewed by the American committee, and returned again to England. Then it underwent a second revision, taking into account the American suggestions, and was again sent back to America to be reviewed. After these four revisions it underwent a fifth in England, chiefly with a view of removing any roughness of rendering. And there was yet a sixth, and in some cases even a seventh revision, for the

<sup>1</sup> Erasmus (see page 76), not finding the words in any Greek manuscript, omitted them from the first two editions of his Greek Testament, which was chiefly the authority that our translators used. But as they had long stood in the Latin Vulgate, an outcry was at once raised that he was tampering with the Bible. He insisted that no Greek manuscript contained the passage; "and," said he at last, when they pressed him, "if you can show me even a single one in which they occur, I will insert them in the future." Unfortunately they did find one, the manuscript of Montfort, which is now in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, but is evidently no older than about the fifteenth century. The words had got into it probably from some corrupt Latin manuscript; and on this slight authority Erasmus admitted them into his text.

settling of points that we need not enter on more fully here. So that we may have every confidence that the changes made, whatever their merits, at least were made only after the most thorough consideration.

And so the work went on, month after month, and more than ten years had passed, and some of the most eminent of those who sat that summer day in the Jerusalem Chamber were numbered among the dead, when, on the evening of November 11, 1880, the New Testament Company assembled in the church of St. Martin-in-Fields for a special service of prayer and thanksgiving—"of thanksgiving for the happy completion of their labours—of prayer that all that had been wrong in their spirit or action might mercifully be forgiven, and that He whose glory they had humbly striven to promote might graciously accept this their service, and use it for the good of man and the honour of His holy Name."

Four years afterwards the Old Testament Company finished their work, and on May 5th, 1885, the complete Revised Bible was in the hands of the public.

§ 4. And now a few words about this Revised Bible. It is quite outside the plan of this little book to offer any criticisms on its merits or demerits, or any judgment as to its ultimate reception. Indeed, it is rather soon yet to pronounce very confidently on either question. For many years after its first appearance our present grand Old Version had to encounter

fierce opposition and severe criticism—Broughton, the greatest Hebrew scholar of the day, wrote to King James that he “would rather be torn asunder by wild horses than allow such a version to be imposed on the Church,”<sup>1</sup>—and yet in the end it won its way and attained a position that no version before or since in any country has attained.

Whether the New Version will equally succeed, or whether, as is the general opinion, it will need a revision before being fully received, remains yet to be seen. But in any case let us give it a fair unprejudiced reception. Dr. Bickersteth tells of a smart young American deacon who thought to crush it on its first appearance by informing his people that “if the Authorised Version was good enough for St. Paul it was good enough for him,” and it is to be feared that with many people who are far less ignorant there is sometimes a similar spirit exhibited.

Now let us remember that, whatever the merits or demerits of the book, it is at least entitled to respect as an earnest attempt to get nearer to the truth, and to present to English-speaking people the results of two centuries of study by the most eminent Biblical scholars.

And remember, too, that no previous revision has ever had such advantages as this. Not to speak of the

<sup>1</sup> In fifteen verses of Luke iii., he says, the translators have fifteen score of idle words to account for in the Day of Judgment. With Archbishop Bancroft, who took the lead in the work, he is especially indignant. He believes that by-and-by King James, looking down from Abraham's bosom, shall behold Bancroft in the place of torment.

valuable manuscripts available, "upon no previous revision have so many scholars been engaged. In no previous revision has the co-operation of those engaged on it been so equally diffused over all parts of the work. In no previous revision have those who took the lead in it shown so large a measure of Christian confidence in those who were outside their own communion. In no previous revision have such effective precautions been created by the very composition of the body of Revisers against accidental oversight or against any lurking bias that might arise from natural tendencies or ecclesiastical prepossessions. On these accounts alone, if on no other, this Revision may be fairly said to possess peculiar claims upon the confidence of all thoughtful and devout readers of the Bible."

§ 5. It was objected by some, when this Revision was first proposed, that it would be dangerous to unsettle men's faith by showing them that the old Bible they so revered contained many passages wrongly translated, and some even which had no right to a place in it at all. It is pleasant to see that such unworthy sentiments are rapidly disappearing. It would be a sad case indeed if men's faith were to depend on their teachers keeping from them facts which they themselves have long since known—acting, to use Dean Stanley's scathing comparison, like the Greek bishops at Jerusalem, who pretend at Easter to receive the sacred fire from heaven, and though they do not

profess to believe personally in the supposed miracle, yet retain the ceremonial, lest the ignorant multitudes who believe in it should have their minds disquieted.

Far better to do what has been done—fearlessly make any changes that were necessary to remove the few superficial flaws in our Bible, and try to teach men the grounds on which such changes were made. Our faith is given to the infallible words of the inspired writers. It is no disparagement to them if we discover that fallible men in collecting and translating these words have sometimes made mistakes, and it is certainly no honour to the words which we profess to reverence if we knowingly allow these mistakes to remain uncorrected.

When King James's translation was offered there was no such fear of unsettling men's faith, for <sup>as</sup> have men of that day had already four or five different Bibles competing for their favour, and so they <sup>as</sup> read distinguished between an Inspired Original and <sup>as</sup> these English versions of that original, one of which <sup>as</sup> taste of easily be better than another. <sup>as</sup> out of

Rightly understood, this Revision should be <sup>should</sup> a ground for increased confidence, showing us <sup>Such</sup> nearly perfect we may consider our English <sup>They</sup> already, when we find that this thorough criticism the investigation of material collecting for the <sup>used to</sup> two hundred years has left unchanged every <sup>Version,</sup> which we found in our Old Version, while <sup>and he will</sup> ~~janness~~, though is helping us to understand some of the <sup>quite as well as</sup> ~~quite as well as~~ than we ever did before.

§ 6. A few remarks on the New Revision itself will close this chapter. The Revisers refer to their work under the heads of TEXT, TRANSLATION, LANGUAGE, and MARGINAL NOTES.

Whatever may be thought of their corrections of the TEXT (*i.e.*, the original Hebrew and Greek), the reader is already in a position in some measure to judge of the sources of information accessible to them and of their fitness to make such corrections.

As to TRANSLATION and LANGUAGE, perhaps there is foundation for the charge against the New Testament Company at least, of having disregarded the first rule laid down for them by Convocation, "to introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the Authorised Version." But before condemning them it is fair to read their explanations in the Preface.

It at least will be universally allowed, that if we

§ 5. Most in smoothness and beauty of diction, we was greatly gained in point of accuracy. A scrupulous

attention to the force of the Greek article, the settling of tenses of verbs, and the delicate shades of meaning in particles and prepositions, will account for many of the minor changes, which, though they seem at first sight trifling and unnecessary, will be found to affect seriously the meaning of a verse. The Revisers also claim to have avoided the

on the same adopted in the Authorised Version, of trans- themselves the sake of euphony the same Greek word by Dean Stanley.

h words. For example, we have com- bishops at Jerusa- e—eternal and everlasting—count, the sacred fire fr

and impute, and reckon<sup>1</sup>—as respectively renderings of the same Greek word, while, on the other hand, to take only one example, the word “ordain” represents ten different words in the original Greek. The result of such a practice is, that the English reader, using a Concordance or the marginal references of his Bible to compare passages where the same word occurs, is sometimes misled and frequently loses much useful information.

In such cases the Revisers have sacrificed elegance to accuracy of translation, though, of course, that is not a sufficient plea, unless it can be shown that elegance and accuracy cannot here go together.

The MARGINAL NOTES contain much valuable information, and often throw fresh light on the translation in the text. But it is to be regretted that in a book intended for indiscriminate circulation the Revisers have used one class of these notes rather unguardedly. When such expressions are found as “Some manuscripts read the passage thus,” “Some ancient authorities omit these words,” &c., the reader who understands the state of the case sees nothing disturbing in the fact that out of a large number of authorities examined some few should vary from the reading found in all the others. Such readers the Revisers seem to have had in view. They

<sup>1</sup> In Rom. iv., Authorised Version, these three verbs are used to represent one Greek verb. Let the reader turn to the Revised Version, where the word “reckon” is used throughout the chapter, and he will see how much St. Paul’s argument has gained in clearness, though perhaps the passage in reading does not sound quite as well as before.

did not enough think themselves into the position of the plain simple men and women who have never heard of such matters, and on whom one cannot help fearing, from the frequent repetition of such notes, a disturbing effect which is in reality quite unwarranted.

A very valuable improvement is the arrangement of the text into paragraphs adapted to the subject. The continuity of thought is not, as in our Authorised Version, interrupted by frequent and often very injudicious breaks into verses, while yet the facilities for reference are retained by the numbering of the old division in the margin. The printing of the Poetical Books in proper metrical form may be considered, too, a decided advantage. They were directed also to revise the headings of chapters, and it would certainly be an advantage if this were well done, adapting it to the paragraph system. But there is much force in their reason for leaving it undone. It involved in many cases expressions of theological opinion which could not fairly find a place in the Bible. Indeed, Jewish readers have had to complain of the Old Testament chapter headings in the Authorised Version, that when the prophets speak of sin it is always the sin of the Jews, but when of glory and of holiness, it is the glory and holiness of the Church.

On the whole, whatever the imperfections of the Revised Bible, and whatever its fate may be in the future, we may at the very least claim a present position for it as a most valuable commentary to the readers of the Authorised Version, placing them as nearly as

an English version can do on a level with the reader of the original tongues.

And now we have followed the story of the Bible from the old record chest of Ephesus 1800 years ago to the new book which is in our hands to-day, and it is hoped that the question has been in some measure answered, How we got our Bible.

Let the story help us to value our Bible more. It is not without purpose that God has so wonderfully preserved His message; it is not without purpose that He raised up His workers to search out the precious manuscripts from the dusty libraries of convent and cathedral, to collect and compare them together with such toil and care, and then to render into clear graceful English for us the very message which He sent to earth thousands of years since to comfort and brighten human life. "Other men indeed have laboured, and we have entered into their labours."

May it please Him who has so preserved for us His Word to grant us all "increase of grace to hear meekly that Word, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit"!

THE END.

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